

Israeli jets raid S. Lebanon

SIDON (R) — Israeli jets raided positions of the Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC) led by Abu Nidal Wednesday northeast of this southern port city, security sources said. They said two warplanes protected by three others swooped low and dropped at least six bombs on the FRC positions 40 kilometres south of Beirut. There was no immediate report of casualties, but witnesses said clouds of smoke billowed over the area as ambulances and rescue teams rushed to the scene. They said flares lit the sky over the raided area. This was the first Israeli air raid on Lebanon this year. Israel launched 27 attacks against Lebanese and Palestinian positions last year, killing 96 people. At least 10 of those raids were aimed against the FRC.

Volume 14 Number 3983

AMMAN THURSDAY-FRIDAY JANUARY 12-13, 1989, JUMADA AL THANI 3-4, 1409

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

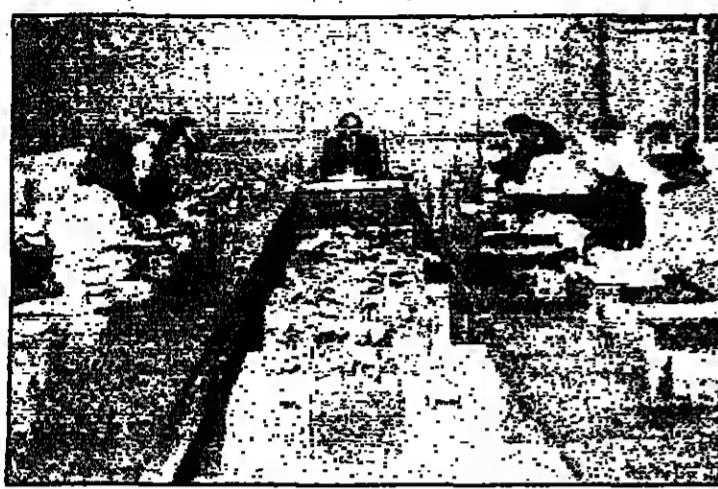
Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جريدة الأردن تنشر يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحافية الأردنية - الرأي

Arab ministers gather in Tunis

TUNIS (R) — Arab foreign ministers began to arrive in Tunis Wednesday for emergency Arab League sessions on the Libyan-U.S. dispute and the constitutional crisis in Lebanon. Libyan Foreign Minister Jaddallah Azzouz Al Taibi, whose country requested the first meeting after U.S. jets attacked two Libyan planes Jan. 4, discussed preparations Wednesday with Arab League Secretary General Chadi Kibi. Tunisian Foreign Minister Abdul Hamid Al Sheik returned from Paris and briefed President Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali on the conference on banning chemical weapons. Most of the Arab ministers attended the Paris conference and will be coming direct to Tunis for the two sessions Thursday. The league had originally arranged the meetings for Wednesday but postponed them for a day to give the ministers time to finish off their work in Paris. Arab diplomats say the session on Libya will give Tripoli a statement of solidarity but will not invoke the joint Arab Defence Pact or military assistance. On Lebanon, which has no president and two rival governments, the main proposal is to set up a group of up to five ministers to contact the rival Lebanese factions in preparation for new presidential elections. (see page 2)



Prime Minister Zaid Rifai Wednesday meets a delegation representing the Council of Europe (Petra photo)

Rifai, Lawzi review Mideast with Council of Europe delegation

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Prime Minister Zaid Rifai held talks Wednesday on the latest political developments in the Middle East with a visiting delegation representing the Council of Europe.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Rifai and the delegation headed by Miguel Angel Martinez, leader of the Spanish group in the Council of Europe, also reviewed means to boost cooperation in various fields between Jordan and the European Economic Community (EEC).

Earlier, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi received the delegation, which arrived here from Cairo. Lawzi briefed the delegation on Jordan's efforts for a peaceful, fair and comprehensive settlement to the Middle East conflict. He also reviewed the latest developments in the region and pointed out that Israel remained intransigent and adamant in its rejection of international legitimacy and peace initiatives despite peace overtures by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which has accepted U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 and renounced terrorism.

The call by His Majesty King

Hussein for an international peace conference on the Middle East stems from Jordan's faith in the international will and legitimacy, coupled with guarantees undertaken by the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, Lawzi said.

In reply, Martinez said, the delegation's visit to Jordan was to assess the situation in the Middle East and gain first-hand information on prospects for peace in the region as well as on how Europe could play a role in endeavours for a just and fair settlement to the conflict.

Lawzi and the delegation also reviewed dimensions of Jordan's legal and administrative disengagement from the occupied West Bank, the ongoing Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories and their impact on efforts for peace.

Several members of the Upper House of Parliament attended the meeting.

The visiting delegation includes parliamentarians from Spain, France, Britain, Italy, Greece, Holland, Turkey, Portugal, and West Germany.

In an interview with Petra, Martinez lauded Jordan's efforts for peace in the Middle East.

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AROUND THE WORLD...

Mahdi plans broad-based government

KHARTOUM (AP) — Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi has agreed to a former coalition partner's demand for a broadly based government drawn from all political parties and Sudan's powerful trade and professional unions, a newspaper said Wednesday. Quoting a high-level source in Mahdi's Umma Party, the newspaper Al Khartoum reported the decision was taken at a party meeting Monday and that the party has begun political contacts to forge a compromise formula on the matter.

Tunisian elections brought forward

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia will hold parliamentary and presidential elections April 2 instead of April 9, a government official said Wednesday. President Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali announced the April 9 date in a Nov. 7 speech but officials later realized this would fall within the fasting month of Ramadan. The presidential elections will be the first since 1974 when former President Habib Bourguiba stood unopposed for a fourth successive term. In 1975 the Chamber of Deputies (parliament) made him president for life. Ibn Ali is likely to be the only serious candidate this year though some small opposition groups have spoken of putting up their own candidates to challenge him.

Austrian chancellor arrives in Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky arrived Wednesday on a five-day visit during which he is to meet with President Hosni Mubarak, the Middle East News Agency (MENA) said. He was greeted at Cairo international airport by Prime Minister Atef Sedki and other high-ranking Egyptian officials.

Turkey raps Greek Cypriots

ANKARA (R) — Turkey criticised the Greek-Cypriot side Wednesday over its position in talks on the island's reunification. "The Greek-Cypriot stand to exclude from the minutes of the meeting two new papers presented by the Turkish side and their objection to disclosing them in the Cypriot National Council are negative developments," Foreign Ministry spokesman Inal Batu said. "They create anxiety over the intentions of the Greek-Cypriot side," he said.

Sudan's judges return to work

KHARTOUM (R) — Striking Sudanese judges withdrew their resignations and returned to their benches Wednesday after winning a high-level hearing of their complaints, the official news agency SUNA reported. Their eight-day walk-out was sparked by a proposal from a ministerial committee that judges' salaries be cut. The judges are also unhappy about what they say is government interference in court affairs and arrests of provincial judges, especially in the south.

U.N. chief gets Palme Prize

STOCKHOLM (AP) — U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar was awarded the \$16,000 Olof Palme Prize for Public Service Tuesday, and said he would use the money for a scholarship for peacemakers. Perez de Cuellar accepted the award from Lisbet Palme, widow of the U.N. mediator and four-term Swedish prime minister who was shot dead nearly three years ago.

Al Hussein, Rifai, Lawzi discuss peace prospects with European parliamentarians

King: Mideast needs no new plans but efforts to implement U.N. resolutions

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

AMMAN — There is no need for new initiatives to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict but there is need for positive response on the part of all concerned parties towards implementing United Nations resolutions on the issue so that the Palestinian problem could be resolved in all its aspects, His Majesty King Hussein said Wednesday.

Parties to the conflict and world peace should not remain hostage to the will of a single party — Israel — which continues to reject international legitimacy as the basis for a just and fair solution to the conflict, the King told a delegation representing the European Parliament led by Speaker Lord Plumb.

The King said Israel should rise to the level of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and respond to the call of peace and accept U.N. conditions for peace.

Plumb and the delegation are currently on a tour of the region on a fact-finding mission aimed primarily at helping efforts to the conflict.

Lawzi and the delegation also reviewed dimensions of Jordan's legal and administrative disengagement from the occupied West Bank, the ongoing Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories and their impact on efforts for peace.

Several members of the Upper House of Parliament attended the meeting.

The visiting delegation includes parliamentarians from Spain, France, Britain, Italy, Greece, Holland, Turkey, Portugal, and West Germany.

In an interview with Petra, Martinez lauded Jordan's efforts for peace in the Middle East.

(Continued on page 3)

The King voiced optimism that in light of the new superpower dente, which helped resolve many regional conflicts with direct bearing on world peace and stability, the Middle East problem could also acquire additional attention from Moscow and Washington, particularly that the region is abundant with devastating weapons and of real strategic importance to the world.

The King said the ongoing uprising in the occupied territories reflects the Palestinian people's determination to preserve their identity and defend dignity and freedom on their national soil. "It should be noted as well that both sides have extremist elements which do not wish to see peace and they continue to try by all means to undermine sincere peace efforts," the King said.

Peace in Gulf, Lebanon

The ceasefire between Iran and Iraq after eight years of war in the Gulf should be used to arrive at a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, the King said.

Commenting on the strife in Lebanon, the King said all possi-



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday receives a meeting attended by Upper House of Parliament European Parliament Speaker Lord Plumb in a

Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi (right)

His efforts should be exerted to restore that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity and unity.

Jordan has not been spared from international terrorism and the Kingdom is standing firm in the face of all forms of terrorism,

the King said. He added that combatting terrorism needs sincere international cooperation.

The King paid tribute to the

European Economic Community's (EEC) role in the Middle East and said the community's efforts were essential for achieving peace in the region.

Jordan is totally committed to close cooperation with Europe in the service of world peace and freedom.

In reply to the King's remarks, Plumb said the European Parlia-

(Continued on page 3)

World pledges to outlaw chemical weapons

PARIS (Agencies) — The world community pledged Wednesday to outlaw all chemical weapons and to rapidly sign a convention enacting the ban.

More than 140 countries ended a five-day conference with a declaration to eliminate chemical weapons.

The chairman of the declaration's drafting committee, Kalevi Sorsa of Finland, summarised the six-part declaration.

The declaration reaffirmed the 1925 Geneva protocol prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. It called for stepped-up negotiations in Geneva to ban the development, production, storage and use of chemi-

cal arms. It also urged strengthened powers for U.N. secretary-general to investigate chemical weapons use.

Sorsa said the declaration illustrates "the common will of nations to condemn chemical weapons."

"This will has prevailed... in the preparation of the final text," he said. Preparing the text "required concessions and compromises from all sides.

"From here on we can return back to the Paris conference and its text."

The 600-word statement, forged during long hours of haggling by negotiators, is expected to give powerful impetus to the conference on disarmament.

But French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, presiding at the session, made clear that both speakers had expressed their support for the final declaration.

Arab delegates "tried to draw attention to the particular situation in our region," Aziz said at a news conference.

"Where there is one country that has nuclear weapons and that country has mass destruction weapons is not a signature to the Non-Proliferation Treaty... and has refused to reach peace... that nation constitutes a real threat to the peace and security of the region," Aziz said.

Arab countries had wanted the final declaration to link nuclear disarmament to chemical disarmament. The Arab position was that so long as Israel maintained a nuclear force, the Arab states needed to

have chemical arms. Including the word "nuclear" in the final document became the main obstacle in a final declaration.

The final document that was receiving a last reading by foreign ministers Wednesday morning did not include the word nuclear, but refers to "general and complete disarmament."

"I read the final draft," Aziz said. "And that draft falls short of our concerns. It refers to matters in generalities but it doesn't highlight the matter as we would want it highlighted."

"This conference is not the end of things," he said, adding that Arab states would press the matter at ongoing negotiations on a chemical weapons ban in

Geneva.

Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz of Iraq said he and other Arab delegations finally decided not to

take a position that would prevent the success of the conference.

The United States and the Soviet Union, the only countries which admit possessing chemical weapons, fought to include a tough statement on the proliferation of poison gases. Both have stocks.

But they gave ground in the face of Third World complaints that the non-proliferation drive was simply a way of keeping developing nations deprived of high technology.



Yasser Arafat

said.

Arafat refrained from naming any countries which offered to recognise the Palestinian state. But he was optimistic that the EEC Committee for Palestinian Affairs would produce a new, practical initiative "suitable to deal with the new conditions."

5 protesters wounded in occupied territories

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot and wounded five Palestinians in clashes in the Gaza Strip refugee camps of Nuseirat and Khan Yunis and the West Bank village of 'Ain Alshuh. Among the wounded was a 12-year-old shot in the left thigh.

Two others, shot earlier in week, were in critical condition in Jerusalem's Mokassed hospital, officials said.

A senior general has resigned his commission with complaints that Israeli efforts to put down the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories could damage the moral fiber of army soldiers, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Questions about the army's role in the occupied territories are increasingly being debated in Israel, with chief of staff Dan Shomron also quoted Wednesday as saying that troops could never quell the rebellion because it is a political struggle.

Also Wednesday, Israeli newspapers said the army had indicted three Palestinians for murder on charges of throwing three firebombs at an Israeli passenger bus Oct. 30 in Jericho.

Five Israelis including one soldier died in the attack. The Palestinians were identified as in their early 20s.

Meanwhile, Jewish settlers have called an unprecedented strike Thursday to protest against Palestinian demonstrations and anti-occupation activities. Dozens of settlers have been injured by petrol bombs and rocks thrown by Palestinians during the 13-month-old uprising.

On Tuesday, Israeli troops shot and wounded 10 Palestinians — two critically — during protests in the West Bank and Gaza.

Hospital officials said troops also shot dead three villagers near

during the Gaza Strip protests and identified him as a Shi'ite resident.

In the West Bank, troops clashing with stone-throwing residents shot and wounded four protesters in Tulkarem and Al Anari camps, including an eight-year-old girl who was shot in the hand, the army said.

Amal, Hizbollah fight amid intense mediation

KAFAR FILA, Lebanon (Agencies) — Amal militiamen launched hit-and-run attacks through driving rain and fog Wednesday while waiting for the weather to allow a full assault on their Hizbollah rivals in South Lebanon.

"The battle will only end when we clean the area from Hizbollah. We are waiting for the weather to improve to launch a new attack," said Fida, an Amal official.

At least 115 people have died in 12 days of bitter fighting between Amal and Hizbollah — the Iranian-backed Party of God — as they struggle for control of Lebanon's 1.5 million Shi'ites.

Independent security sources said the fighting in the mountainous Iqlim Al Tufah area had killed 60 people — 32 Amal militiamen, 21 Hizbollah fighters and seven civilians — and wounded 67 since Saturday.

The sources expected the toll to rise but said fighting was hampering rescue work.

Haggard-looking Amal militiamen said they seized 80 per cent of the small town of Jubah on the edge of Israel's self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

They said 30 fighters were battling Hizbollah militiamen entrenched at the eastern end of the town linking them to 'Ain Busayra, the last Hizbollah bastion in

the area.

Two-thirds of Jubah's 6,000 population have fled.

Syria and Iran are trying to end the fighting, with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besharati meeting Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus Tuesday to discuss the issue before going to Lebanon.

Iran's IRNA news agency said an Iranian delegation led by Foreign Ministry official Mahmoud Hashemi had already met the head of the supreme Shi'a council, Sheikh Mohammad Mehdi Shamseddine.

Hizbollah is the parent organisation for pro-Iranian factions who hold most of the 15 Western hostages, including nine Americans, kidnapped in Lebanon.

"Hizbollah kidnaps, Iran profits and the Shi'ites of Lebanon harvest the loss," read a slogan daubed on walls of Kafar Filla.

Amal and Hizbollah gunmen clashed briefly in west Beirut's Bourj Ahu Haidar district Wednesday before Syrian troops intervened.

Alef Aoun, one of the

Afghan rebels reject Soviet stand, vows to continue fighting

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan rebels dismissed Wednesday as another threat Moscow's warning that it might keep its troops in Afghanistan beyond the Feb. 15 deadline, and vowed to fight on.

"It is not possible that we surrender to this super power," guerrilla alliance leader Sibghatullah Mojaddidi said in a speech. Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Vorontsov said in Moscow Tuesday his country might not meet the deadline, to which it committed itself in U.N.-mediated Geneva accords last April.

President Reagan said in Washington the United States expected Moscow to complete the troop withdrawal by the deadline despite suggestions that it may not be able to do so.

Mojaddidi, speaking at the Pakistan Institute of Strategic Studies, said Vorontsov had been making threats in his talks with guerrilla delegations in Saudi Arabia last month and in Islamabad last week.

"It is also a threat," he said of Vorontsov's statement, made at a news conference on his return from the talks.

"Whether they delay (the troop pullout) or not, we will continue our struggle," the guerrilla leader added.



Najibullah — focus of conflict

Mojaddidi heads the main Pakistan-based seven-party alliance fighting the Soviet-backed government of President Najibullah's People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

The alliance said two days ago it would not hold further talks with Moscow on a future Afghan government until the withdrawal

of all Soviet troops and the fall of the PDPA government.

Mojaddidi, whose alliance wants Moscow to stop backing the Kabul government, said: "We have offered them conditions. If they accept these conditions, we are ready to talk to them again."

The guerrillas rejected a unilateral ceasefire declared by Najibullah Jan. 1 as well as a Soviet proposal that the PDPA have a part in the future broad-based government.

Mojaddidi said the guerrillas would have talked to the PDPA government if it had been independent. "But they are a puppet regime of the Russians and we are talking to the Russians."

He said the guerrillas could offer no concession to the PDPA except an amnesty for its members if they surrendered.

Moscow has withdrawn half of its more than 100,000 troops in Afghanistan under the Geneva accords aimed at ending the 10-year-old war and should complete the pullout by Feb. 15.

Vorontsov told the news conference it was too early to talk about a withdrawal schedule, adding: "Circumstances could arise under which the Soviet Union will be unable to do what we have, in principle, decided to do."



Feb. 15 deadline to complete the withdrawal (Sigma photo)

Syria backs proposal for Arab contact group on Lebanon

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Syria's Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa was quoted Wednesday as saying his country supported proposals for a ministerial contact group on Lebanon's constitutional crisis.

"Syria supports an Arab committee to make contact and listen to all Lebanese groups in order to achieve reconciliation based on political reform," the independent Al Nahar newspaper quoted Sharaa as telling its correspondent in Paris Tuesday.

The idea has been circulating in advance of a Arab League meeting in Tunis, which has been postponed until Thursday to give ministers time to arrive from an international conference on chemical weapons in Paris.

Lebanon has not had a president since Amin Gemayel ended his term in September without a successor being elected.

The Tunis meeting was postponed because most of the Arab foreign ministers were still in Paris attending the international conference on chemical weapons, where Arab states want to link the banning of chemical weapons to that of nuclear arms.

The visit of Arab League Secretary General Chadi Klibi to Spain, scheduled for Thursday, also was postponed 24 hours.



Farouq Sharaa

Arab League spokesman Mohammad Maghribi said the first session, on Libya, would start Thursday morning instead of Wednesday afternoon and the ministers would then go straight on to discussing Lebanon at a technically separate session.

In the debate on Lebanon, the ministers will have to decide whether to include Syria or Iraq or both on the proposed ministerial contact group, Arab diplomats said Tuesday.

The contact group, which could

include up to five Arab foreign ministers, would have the task of getting in touch with all the parties in Lebanon's internal conflict in the hope of paving the way for presidential elections.

It is the only practical proposal the Arab League Council is likely to discuss, though the Arab ministers may bring new ideas from Paris, the diplomats said.

The meeting on Libya was demanded by Tripoli immediately after the destruction of two Libyan jets Jao. 4 by fighters from a U.S. carrier in the Mediterranean. The United States says it acted in self defence. Libya says its patrol planes were attacked.

The meeting on Lebanon was sought by Sudan to discuss Lebanon's institutional crisis.

However, Lebanon will not be represented at the meeting, a source at the Lebanese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday.

Two feuding Lebanese cabinets, one military and one civilian, have failed to agree on a unified delegation to represent Lebanon at the Tunis parley, said the Foreign Ministry source.

"Unfortunately no agreement could be reached on a Lebanese representation although the Lebanon crisis is on the Arab League's agenda," the source said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel, Egypt discuss Taba

PARIS (AP) — Egyptian and Israeli foreign ministers held a second meeting Tuesday on the sidelines of the chemical weapons conference here to try to solve the problem of the disputed territory of Taba, officials said. Egyptian Foreign Minister Esamat Abdul Meguid and his Israeli counterpart, Moshe Arens, talked for 90 minutes, spokesmen for both embassies said. The two met for the first time Sunday.

Lebanese smuggler jailed in Cyprus

LARNACA (AP) — A local court sentenced a Lebanese heroin smuggler Tuesday to four years imprisonment for trying to smuggle 210 grammes of heroin. Ali Mohammed Haidar was arrested Oct. 14 in this port city in transit for Spain and was charged with attempting to deliver the drug to a second party there. Haidar, who arrived by boat from the Lebanese port of Jounieh, was hiding the drug in his anus. The 44-year-old Lebanese made the airport narcotics agents suspicious by the way he walked and later X-ray checks at the town's general hospital revealed three small bags of heroin hidden in his body.

Qom ready for Soviet students

NICOSIA (R) — Theological schools in Qom, Iran's main centre of Shi'ite learning, are prepared to teach Islam to Soviet students and researchers. Tehran Radio reported Tuesday. In a message delivered at the Kremlin last week, Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini pronounced communism dead and invited Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to send aides to Qom to study Islam. Tehran Radio said the Association of Qom Theologica professors announced it was ready to back up Khomeini's offer. There has been no response from the Soviet Union yet.

Warrant out in cruise ship attack

PIRAEUS (AP) — A district attorney in this Athens port city has issued an arrest warrant for an Arab who allegedly took part in the City of Poros cruise ship attack last July, a spokesman for his office said Tuesday. Piraeus district attorney Giorgos Vlassis issued the arrest warrant for Mohammad Adnan Zozad, 21, Monday, said the spokesman. But a report drafted by port authority officials and submitted to the district attorney on Dec. 23 said Zozad, a Lebanese national, was killed by an explosion aboard the liner. Police said after the attack that they had found remains of a leg which they believed belonged to Zozad.

Britain to withdraw Gulf navy patrol

LONDON (R) — Britain said Tuesday it would withdraw its force of three ships sent to the Gulf in 1987 to clear mines laid during the Iran-Iraq war. Armed Forces Minister Archie Hamilton said in a statement the August ceasefire in the Gulf and the success of British, Belgian, Dutch, Italian, French and U.S. ships in removing mines made it possible to recall the three minesweepers in March. He said the patrol would remain in the area of the Gulf and the Indian Ocean ready to escort British-registered ships if Iranian or Iraqi forces resumed attacks. Three minesweepers would stand by in case mine-laying resumed.

Iran: British 'threats' unproductive

NICOSIA (AP) — London's demands that Tehran should do more to help free three British hostages in Lebanon before bilateral ties can be improved have evoked an angry response in an English-language Iranian daily. Also Tuesday, British Airways said that it had cancelled next Friday's scheduled flight to Tehran, which was to be the carrier's first flight to Iran after a three-year break. The airline said it hopes to resume flights from the week after. The Tehran Times said in an editorial Tuesday, that "such statements can appear as threats from London, to slow down the pace of improving relations," the Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

Remissions to over 900 prisoners in Morocco

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco has remitted the sentences of 985 prisoners to mark a nationalist anniversary Wednesday, the Justice Ministry said. The ministry did not say who would benefit. In previous royal clemency cases they have been criminals. Two Moroccan human rights groups appealed in December for a general amnesty for political prisoners. Opposition parties put the number of such detainees at between 25 and 300. Wednesday is the 45th anniversary of the publication of the "Independence Manifesto" by nationalists of the Istiqlal Party during the French and Spanish protectorates.

Egyptian court rejects editor's request

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian court Tuesday rejected an editor's request to reopen a cultural and scientific club that was shut down by the government after its newspaper published an editorial critical of Saudi Arabia. The Cairo court ruled that the club, through its newspaper, had entered into political activities counter to its charter, the Middle East News Agency reported. The government in August disbanded the Friends of the Arab Media Club, which sponsored the Nasserite weekly Sawt Al Arab, after it attacked Saudi Arabia's government in an editorial.

Mossad head to be replaced

TEL AVIV (AP) — The head of Israel's super-secret Mossad intelligence agency is to be replaced within several days after spending more than six years in the post, Israel Radio reported Tuesday. It said that the agent, whose name was not given in keeping with "security" regulations, was the first Mossad official ever appointed to head the service. The outgoing head of Mossad is to be replaced either by another senior Mossad official or by a "senior personality from outside that organisation," the radio reported. It said that during his years in service the intelligence agency suffered some failures, among them the discovery of false passports used by Mossad operatives in West Germany and the expulsion of Mossad agents from Britain several months ago.

Israeli group calls for closure of Dhahiriya detention centre

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Civil Rights Association of Israel Tuesday appealed to the supreme court for closure of a military detention centre in the occupied territories saying Palestinians were kept in inhumane conditions, Israel Radio reported.

Meanwhile, two Palestinian lawyers who visited another military prison in the Naqeb Desert said they were told of violent protests in the prison after a sick inmate was refused treatment.

The civil rights group's petition asked the court to order the army to close the detention centre in the village of Dhahiriya, 25 kilometres southwest of Hebron, the radio report said.

It said lawyers who visited the facility found conditions to be "shocking."

The petition, filed on behalf of four inmates, said one of them was in a cell 20 metres square

with between 30 and 30 other Palestinian prisoners.

The group told Israel Radio the cell had almost no ventilation and no sunlight. The inmates were provided with a basket instead of a toilet, and the cell stank, the lawyers' group was quoted as saying.

There were no figures available on how many Palestinians were being held at the centre.

The number of detainees has sharply increased since Palestinians launched the uprising in December 1987.

The army says it has more than 5,500 Palestinians in detention, including more than 1,500 held under "emergency regulations."

The lawyers from Bethlehem who visited the Ketziot prison in Israel said Tuesday that inmates were told the protests broke out Sunday night after prison guards refused medical care to a sick

Reagan insists downing of Libyan jets was 'self-defence'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Ronald Reagan Tuesday denied a published report that U.S. navy jets may have fired prematurely in shooting down two Libyan MiG-23 fighters over the Mediterranean last Wednesday.

"All the evidence and everything that we have — photographic, sound, everything — shows that they (the U.S. pilots) were justified in what they were doing," Reagan said.

The U.S. leader, questioned by reporters about last week's incident over the Mediterranean at the start of a meeting with Honduran President Jose Azcona, said the American airmen could not afford to wait longer than they did before firing.

Defense Department spokesman Dan Howard echoed Fitzwater.

Reagan's comments, saying that the "warning yellow, weapons hold" command issued by the airborne warfare commander was intended to tell all of the pilots "to be careful; that there was probability of hostilities, and that they could shoot in self defence."

In another U.S.-Libyan row, an American diplomatic campaign has made a disputed Libyan facility less likely to go into operation, produce chemical weapons and require American military intervention, according to a senior U.S. official.

Because of the U.S. effort, "the world spotlight is focused on it (the Libyan facility) and it would seem more difficult for Western companies to step forward and become involved in it," the official told Reuters.

The official told Reuters.

"Remember, we're not dealing with an earlier day with machine guns and close contact," he said. "Today, if a plane persists in keeping you in line ... you have to assume it's getting ready to push a button."

Reagan's comments echoed those of Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, who also termed the pilots' actions "self-defence."

White House spokesman Marvin Fitzwater, asked about the report in the Washington Post, said: "The yellow warning indicates that pilots can take defensive actions to defend themselves ... the fact is that under the yellow caution, they have the right to defend themselves and to fire, and they did."

Defense Department spokesman Dan Howard echoed Fitzwater.

Rajavi lists 1,107 executed

AMMAN (I.T.) — The main Iranian dissident group, Mujahideen-e-Khalq, has named 1,107 political prisoners it said had been executed by Iran since the Aug. 20 ceasefire in the Gulf war.

In a cable to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and telexed to the Jordan Times, Mujahideen leader Masoud Rajavi said:

"The shocking figure is only a portion of at least 12,000 political executions which have been carried out throughout Iran in the past five months."

Rajavi quoted eyewitness reports from Iran as saying: "A great number of political prisoners have been massacred in recent weeks with the use of poisonous gases."

Rajavi emphasised in his telegram: "The Khomeini regime has undoubtedly entered the final stage of its medieval rule since it swallowed the 'poison' of a ceasefire. The regime has now placed the physical extermination of political prisoners on its agenda."

Rajavi pointed to examples of the Khomeini regime's "crimes" such as incinerating the bodies of execution victims in order to destroy criminal evidence such as torture marks on prisoners' bodies.

He urged the U.N. secretary general to take "effective, urgent steps" and requested that he send a U.N. mission to Iran.

Rajavi added: "With the existence of such an extraordinary amount of documents, witnesses

and evidence, the Iranian people and resistance's request is a wholly justified and undeniable demand. Khomeini should not be permitted to brazenly ridicule world public opinion and the General Assembly of the United Nations, which has condemned the grave violation of human rights in Iran for four consecutive years, by sifying his criminal acts. Does such a regime warrant a trial from the United Nations?"

In another statement, the Mujahideen-e-Khalq has applied in Tehrān for permission to carry out political activities under the name Mujahideen-e-Khalq. It called the Iranian revolution's leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, "a collaborator of the regime's intelligence services."

The government in Tehran has announced its intention to relax political controls. Iranian groups have been operating.

The spokesman of the Iranian parliament, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, said last month that Iran respects human rights but is entitled to punish members of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq's National Liberation Army captured in a battle in July.

Grapefruit 160 / 130 Lemon 200 / 150 Marrow (large) 200 / 150 Marrow (small) 350 / 280 Cucumber (French) 150 / 120 Orange (Shamouti) 350 / 300 Orange (local) 250 / 200 Onion (dry) 190 / 150 Pepper (hot) 560 / 480 Pepper (sweet) 300 / 400 Potato 250 / 200 Spinach 120 / 80 Mandarin 240 / 180 Tomatoes 350 / 280

PROGRAMME TWO

17:15 Children's cartoons

17:20 Local programme

17:30 Local programme

17:45 Programmes review

17:50 News in Arabic

17:55 Arabic series

18:00 Local programme

18:15 News summary in Arabic

18:30 Programmes (cont'd.)

FOR FRIDAY

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME ONE

10:00 Koran

10:15 Children's programme

Price of chicken raised to 820 fils

AMMAN (PT) — The price of chicken has gone up by 80 fils a kilogramme in view of the high cost of feed concentrates and veterinary medicine involved in poultry production in the Kingdom, according to an official announcement by Minister of Supply, Fayez Tarawneh.

The minister's statement said that poultry (chicken) meat will be sold from now on at the rate of 820 fils per kilogramme at all stores, up from 740 fils.

It also said that a kilogramme of live chicken bought from stores that slaughter chicken will cost 680 fils up from 600 fils.

The statement made it clear that the increase in prices was decided upon a recommendation from a committee set up to study the poultry situation. This committee, grouped representatives of the ministries of Supply, Agriculture, Industry and Trade, and the Agricultural Credit Corporation.

The last hike in the price of poultry was in 1981, and according to the statement, the rise in the price was inevitable.

The increase in the price of poultry meat followed a period that witnessed a chronic shortage of poultry meat on the local market.

As the short supply of poultry meat was reported, a spokesman for the Ministry of Supply said that only 1,000 chickens were slaughtered at the Amman municipality's slaughter house every day, compared to an average of 22,000 heads of chicken before the crisis.



LAWZI RECEIVES PLUMB: Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi Wednesday received the speaker of European Parliament, Sir Henry Plumb and his accompanying delegation at the parliament building in Amman (see story on page one) (Petra photo)

Soviets to buy first consignment of Jordanian phosphates in 1989

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The Soviet Union will import its first consignment of Jordanian phosphate during 1989 in implementation of an agreement signed by the two sides in Moscow last month. This was announced here following a meeting between Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and Soviet Ambassador to Jordan Alexander Zinichuk during which they reviewed cooperation in a number of fields and developments in the Middle East region, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The agency said the two sides agreed at the meeting that a Soviet technical committee should visit Jordan during January to pave the way for a joint Jordan-Soviet ministerial committee meeting that will convene in Moscow in March.

Saqqaq said upon returning to Amman that the Soviets had expressed desire to purchase 40 types of Jordanian products including toothpaste, tissue paper, cosmetics, woolen cloth, cotton material, socks, gas range, nylon bags, refrigerators, washing machines, domestic appliances, furniture, nails, wooden doors, metal pipes, leather shoes and frames for eyeglasses, leather suitcases, paint, yeast, pesticides, ballpoint pens, detergents, and electric materials.

According to Petra, the prime minister Tuesday also met with Italy's ambassador to Jordan Francesco de Curten who delivered the Italian government's consent to the formation of a joint Jordanian-Italian ministerial committee to promote trade, economic and cultural cooperation.

Jordan and the Soviet Union last month concluded an agreement on trade to be conducted on equitable basis and in a manner that would achieve a balance in trade and increase the volume of exchanged products.

Jordan at present imports Soviet iron ore, timber, paper, equipment and chemicals, and through the December agreement the Kingdom hopes to sell the Soviets phosphate along with other national products.

The agreement in Moscow was concluded during a weeklong visit there by an economic delegation led by the Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Saqqaf following the formation last year of a joint committee to look into ways of promoting trade and economic cooperation.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

RIFAI SENDS CONDOLENCE: Prime Minister Zaid Rifai has delegated the governor of Irbid to participate in the funeral of Mariam Mahmoud Khasawneh and to convey his condolences to the Khasawneh family. (Petra)

HINDAWI MEETS JOSPIN: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouran Hindawi Tuesday held talks with French Minister of Education, Youths, and Sports Lionel Jospin on the sidelines of an international conference on education. They discussed educational, cultural, and technical cooperation between Jordan and France. (Petra)

DAJANI RECEIVES U.K. ENVOY: Interior Minister Rajai Dajani Wednesday reviewed with British Ambassador in Amman Anthony Reeve the existing cooperation between the two countries. (Petra)

MINISTERS TO VISIT GHOR: The Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister of State at the Prime Ministry will visit the Ghor region Thursday to inspect the extent of damage the agricultural projects sustained in the wake of the acute drop in temperature which affected the region recently. (Petra)

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: Zarqa Governor Id Al Qatariq Wednesday discussed with Director General of Urban Development Department Dr. Hisham Zagha development projects at Janaa region and means to boost housing projects in Ruseifeh, Yajouz, and Al Dahriyeh. (Petra)

OICC CONFERENCE: Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh Wednesday reviewed with Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC) Abdul Qadir Oshak the special arrangements to be undertaken for the fifth OICC conference which is due to convene in Amman in the second half of March. (Petra)

72.1 million cubic metres of water stored in reservoirs

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The total amount of rain water stored in reservoirs behind dams in Jordan is now estimated at 72.1 million cubic metres, according to Dr. Mohammad Bani Hani, the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) secretary general.

Bani Hani said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that water behind the King Talal Dam is now estimated at 56 million cubic metres, out of a total reservoir capacity of 90 millions, the Wadi Al Arab Dam has

10 million cubic metres, Sharhabil Dam, 2.6 million and Kafrain and Wadi Shueib each, 900,000 cubic metres of water.

The rain water which is collected in the reservoirs is being used for irrigation in the Jordan Valley during the dry season.

The recent rains were instrumental in replenishing the reservoirs, and according to the Department of Meteorology, rain that fell by the end of December surpassed the general average by 130 to 150 per cent.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

* An exhibition of works by Contemporary Arab Artists at Al Wasiti Art Gallery.

* The Iraqi Cultural Week which includes an exhibition by the Iraqi artist Salam Al Madamreh and an exhibition of children's paintings and children's literary and cultural books, at the Royal Cultural Centre.

* An exhibition entitled "New Museum Buildings in the Federal Republic of Germany" at the Yarmouk University — 11:00 a.m.

* A plastic art exhibition by Mohammad Kamal, Samar Al Sabe' and Nidal Saleh at the Housing Bank Gallery.

* An exhibition of photos and videos on "La Defense", a new district in Paris which became a symbol of architectural creativity, at the French Cultural Centre.

* The Yugoslavian graphic art exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.

BAZAAR

* A charity bazaar that includes wooden handicrafts, embroidery, artificial flowers, children's toys and cultural books at Al'a Centre, Hittin Refugee Camp.

FILM

* A feature film "Inherit the Wind" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.

Greater Amman approves JD 38.714m. budget for '89

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Greater Amman Municipality has approved a JD38,714 million budget for 1989 to cover various sectors of municipal and public services within the Greater Amman region.

The budget was announced at a municipal council meeting Tuesday evening when the Mayor Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh announced that the decision was made to establish a new bus terminal for travellers heading north and the project will be carried out during 1989.

According to the announcement, the municipality will have a deficit of JD2,229 million but this will be covered through cuts in expenditure, increasing collections of taxes on homes and licences for stores and workshops, and fees for car parks, advertisement plates and licences for industries.

Committee to set up Arab certified accountants exam

AMMAN (J.T.) — An experts committee consisting of a number of Arab and international professionals will hold a meeting in London Friday, Jan. 13, to finalise arrangements for the setting up of the first Arab certified accountants examination, scheduled for November of this year.

A number of professional leaders will attend the meeting of the Arab Society of Certified Accountants (ASCA) Examinations Supervisory Committee.

An ASCA spokesman said that Arab graduates in the fields of accounting, business administra-

tion, commerce and economics, will be able to sit for these examinations which are to be held in major Arab capitals not yet designated.

The spokesman added that this step came as a result of intensive contacts with leading international professional societies in addition to the efforts of a number of prominent university professors who cooperated to translate the study material supplied by the Financial Training Courses Ltd., London, a professional training firm.

Intifada created new conditions for Arab workers — ILO aide

By Najwa Najjar
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The intifada in the occupied Arab territories has created new circumstances for Palestinian workers, according to a senior official of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

"The important question in the occupied territories now is what will be the results of the intifada?" said Claude Rossillion, head of Equality of Rights branch of the ILO. "At any rate, workers are willing to endure all the sacrifices (which accompany the intifada)."

According to the information gathered by the ILO's annual mission to the directly involved countries, Rossillion said, Palestinian officials have indicated that the Palestinians in the occupied territories have suffered big economic losses due to the intifada.

During the mission's three-day visit to Jordan, the three delegates met with officials from the Ministry of Labour, the Chamber of Industry, the Jordanian Federation of Trade Unions, the embassy of Palestine and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee for the steadfastness of Palestinian people under occupation.

Rossillion, who left Jordan Wednesday, said ILO's annual mission to Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Tunis, aims to collect relevant information on the occupied territories from the respective countries.

Another ILO mission will visit only the occupied territories next month. The information gathered by both missions will be compiled into an annual report, and will be presented to the ILO.

This "legalistic and political" point is also applied to the heavy taxes on the wages received by Palestinians. "The Palestinians say they are not protected by trade unions, do not receive the benefits of social security or taxes paid," he said.

"Since Israel maintains that conditions are okey, we can never find the full truth," But, Rossillion contend that deductions from the wages of Palestinians working in Israel for certain social security schemes, "are of no use to Palestinians since they are not residents of Israel."

Rossillion stresses that under such circumstances (occupation), "it is difficult to differentiate between trade union activity and political activity."

The ILO has worked to ensure the continued activity of some trade unions. In 1978, the ILO made recommendations to reopen the trade unions in Jerusalem and Gaza. "They were allowed to reopen but with severe restrictions which have always been a problem," Rossillion said, citing one restriction as "Israelis freezing the situation by not allowing the trade unions to have more members than were present in 1967."

The ILO has also made recommendations, which Rossillion says have been followed. "to some extent by the Israelis."

These recommendations have concentrated on extending social security to the Palestinians and

that anyone who wants to work has to pay taxes."

These Palestinian workers in Israel, who are mostly from Gaza, are also the workers facing the most difficult conditions. More than any other workers in the occupied territories they live in "appalling conditions" such as living in small areas with huge concentration of people, poverty and unhealthy surroundings.

Rossillion said, "In the occupied territories everything is obliterated by occupation and the psychological factor which accompanies it. Palestinians feel like foreigners in their own country. So even if there is improvement on behalf of the Israelis, it is in a way true that there can be no improvement with occupation."

But until occupation ends, the ILO has tried to further alleviate the situation by offering technical assistance, vocational, trade union and self-help training and financing for a number of projects.

The ILO was created after 1918 to coordinate efforts with various countries towards improving the situation of workers. At first the ILO was adopted by the Trade Labour Movement, then it became part of the League of Nations. In 1945 the ILO became a specialised U.N. agency working for and defending workers' rights around the world.

As an intergovernmental organisation, the ILO has several bodies which include all member states and which in turn follow up on complaints made by governments, trade unions or employers, adopt resolutions and set up programmes.

The teams, which are sent to different regions, are official representatives of the director general and annual monitoring of situations in different regions continues for as long as the conditions persist.

30,000 foreigners renew work permits in 3 weeks

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — At least 30,000 non-Jordanians working in the Kingdom renewed their work permits over the past three weeks as a result of a consistent campaign by the Ministry of Labour and its various offices in the Kingdom to ensure that foreign workers were abiding by the ministry regulations.

Jardaneh, who returned from AUPAM board meeting and a seminar held in the Moroccan city of Casablanca, said that the survey also revealed that \$0.8 billion worth of the total consumption was of medicine manufactured in the Arab World.

He said the figures indicated that there was need to develop the Arab World's pharmaceutical industries.

He said production could be raised so that Arab pharmaceuticals could form up to 60 per cent of the Arab World's consumption.

Jardaneh told a press confer-

ence here that the three-day seminar in Morocco discussed a host of subjects related to the pharmaceutical industries and called for the establishment of a pan-Arab medicine market in implementation of resolutions passed by the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) which formed the AUPAM.

The seminar urged the Arab Nations to carry out projects designed to bring about an integration among Arab states in pharmaceutical production and called for the removal of all barriers that impede the flow of medicine among the Arab states, Jardaneh noted.

He said the seminar decided to study the establishment of a pan-Arab fund to extend assistance to needy Arab states, especially during natural disasters, and that the subject will be referred to the Arab health ministers at their March 20 meeting in Libya.

Campaign launched to clean up waste in Jordan Valley

DEIR ALLA (Petra, J.T.) — A campaign is being launched in the Jordan Valley region to guide local farmers and citizens on means of disposing of waste plastic which are now being strewn on a wide area of land with harmful effects to the public.

A meeting held under the chairmanship of the central Jordan Valley District governor of

Deir Alla, discussed the problem and decided to entrust heads of local and village councils with the task of forming committees to tour areas and meet with farmers to guide them on means to dispose of the waste, to avoid pollution problems.

The local Department of Education has decided to give instructions on the same issue to

students at schools.

On Dec. 28, Her Majesty Queen Noor chaired a meeting of

committee in charge of planning improvements for the Jordan Valley region and developing its touristic sites.

The committee reported on

steps taken for setting up national parks and serviced picnic areas in

the valley with a view to reducing the amount of waste and litter in the fields.

The committee reviewed a draft law to protect the area from pollution as a result of plastic waste, solid and liquid garbage left by visitors and vacationers, and natural manure which serves as a breeding ground for common flies.

In reply, Plumb reaffirmed that Europe was determined to pursue the quest for peace in the region. "I have been impressed by the urgency of the Palestinian question, the seriousness of the situation in the territories occupied by Israel and the need to engage quickly in genuine discussions to achieve a durable peace," he said.

Following are major excerpts from Plumb's speech:

"The European Economic Community has a common voice and a balanced approach to the present situation. We believe that a settlement must be based on two necessary conditions — the right of self-determination and all that entails for the Palestinians."

"Instead of favourably responding to... positive developments on the part of the PLO... and to the implications of the uprising... Israel insists on rejecting international legitimacy and continues its occupation, expansionism and suppression of the Palestinian people by resorting to the most brutal practices as seen in the killing of thousands, the jailing of tens of thousands, the closure of schools and universities, and the expulsion of citizens from their occupied homeland."

Lawzi called on Europe to "effectively play the vital role which is hoped and needed from you."

"Let Europe take the initiative — as a fair independent international power acceptable to all parties — to

achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East; to bring an end to the four-decade-long tragedy of the Palestinian people; to make the people of the region and yours, our interests and yours, our principles and yours, avoid the risks of continued wars, violence, disappointment, bloody conflicts and destruction..."

In reply, Plumb reaffirmed that Europe was determined to pursue the quest for peace in the region. "I have been impressed by the urgency of the Palestinian question, the seriousness of the situation in the territories occupied by Israel and the need to engage quickly in genuine discussions to achieve a durable peace," he said.

When I addressed the Knesset on Tuesday, I emphasised that a perpetuation of existing policies in the occupied territories could only hold out the prospect of escalating violence."

"I believe that there is a time for peace, and I believe that time is now. I urged that negotiations should now take place. Israel must engage in dialogue."

"None of us know what will be revealed in the refining fire of negotiations. But the European Economic Community will be watching most attentively and with comprehension. We believe we have identified the key elements of an acceptable agreement. We stand ready to participate in and support the efforts of an international peace conference to provide a lasting peace in this region."

Rifai, Lawzi meet delegation

(Continued from page 1)
necessity for convening an international peace conference.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

جورنال تايمز دوريه عربى مطبوعه مستقله صدر باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية على الواسطى المطبوعة بالإنجليزية

Editorial Director:

RAKAN AL MAJALI

Director General:

DR. RADU AL WAQFI

Editor-in-Chief:

DR. WALEED M. SADI

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171-6, 670141-4, 684311, 684366

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Faximile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Calling on the Israelis

BRITAIN'S Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe is right in going over Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's head by appealing directly to the Israelis to reciprocate the Palestinian peace overtures. Sir Geoffrey made his appeal from Sanaa Sunday during a visit to the Yemen Arab Republic in which he urged Israelis "to test the offer that the PLO has made to commit itself to the search for peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict." The British foreign secretary went on to tell the Israeli people: "You have nothing to lose by negotiation; you have much to lose by the perpetration of the present violence and hostility" on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

There is an obvious explanation for this unusual diplomacy: The Israeli leadership's obstinacy in rejecting outright anything that comes out of the PLO has become so hardened and impregnable that even the friends and allies of Israel are convinced that their only hope to maintain the momentum of peace in the Middle East is to bypass the aging Israeli leadership and cultivate Israeli public opinion in a positive direction. Translated into practical manifestations, the international community must therefore await the results of future Israeli national elections when the enlarging nucleus of Israeli body politic in favour of a dialogue and negotiations with the PLO can attain clout and power within Israel.

What is even more commendable about this unorthodox British diplomacy is the observation that it is part and parcel of a twin-track strategy aiming at convincing the Israelis to test the PLO's intentions and offers for peace as well as convincing the new George Bush administration to give the Arab-Israeli conflict high priority when it assumes power in Washington.

The future and fate of the peace process in the Middle East therefore hinge on the attainment of these two complimentary objectives. There are already ample signs that the two objectives are indeed attainable. That is why the sense of optimism generated by the PLO's most recent stance on the Arab-Israeli conflict is consolidating and strengthening in spite of the Israeli leadership's desperate efforts to derail it.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i daily on Wednesday said that the United States has a special role to play in establishing peace and ending the Arab-Israeli conflict in view of the strong U.S.-Israeli relations. In a meeting with U.S. senators and congressmen visiting Jordan Tuesday, King Hussein reviewed the developments in the region and urged the U.S. public opinion and government to work for peace and exert pressure on Israel to respond favourably to the Arab Nation's bid for peace and security based on justice, the paper said. Four decades have passed since the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict; and the people of this region began to despair over the lost chances for peace, the paper noted. It said that the Middle East years for security and stability which can only come through a just and peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The paper added that the people of this region had renewed hopes that peace will be established in view of the fresh international community's clear orientation to solve the Middle East problem and restore security. Peace it said is the only feasible alternative that would save the people of this region further sufferings and tragedies.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily focuses light on the international conference on chemical weapons in Paris and the attitude of the major powers of the world which possess nuclear and chemical arsenals. The conference has shed light on several issues connected with mass destruction weapons and raised a number of unanswered questions about the right of nations to produce and stockpile such devastating arms, says Rakhan Al Majali who is also the paper's editor. The writer cites the United States as an example of those countries, owning all forms of mass destruction weapons and trying to impose its will on smaller nations, denying them the right to possess means with which they can defend themselves. Moreover, the United States which continues to back Israel's acts of aggression is now trying to intimidate the Arabs by threatening to blow up the pharmaceutical plant near Tripoli as a service to its Israeli ally, the writer notes. Of course the U.S.-Israeli alliance has a strategic plan to deprive the Arabs of the right to build their own power that might threaten the military force of Israel and constitute danger to the Jewish state's nuclear or chemical arsenals, the writer continues. He says the U.S. has committed a series of terrorist actions against the Arab Nation with or without the assistance of Israel; but the recent aggression on Libya and the downing of its aircraft should be regarded as one more link in the U.S.-Israeli conspiracy.

Al Dustour daily said that King Hussein has once again explained to the United States through its visiting senators and congressmen the situation in the Arab region and the Arab Nation's clear orientation towards a just and durable peace. The Arabs are openly working for peace and supporting the Palestinian people to achieve that goal and regain their rights, the paper said. The whole world has welcomed the Palestinian declaration of recognition of U.N. Security Council resolutions, a denunciation of terrorism and an acceptance of peace based on justice, the paper added. It said that the King has voiced Jordan's satisfaction with Washington's decision to open a dialogue with the PLO in a bid to reach an understanding over a lasting settlement. The monarch said that there is need now to intensify the world community's efforts to give momentum to the peace process.

Sawt Al Shaab daily noted that Jordan's contacts with the world powers are pan of its on-going offensive world-wide to promote the peace process. Statements by members of the visiting U.S. delegations on the Middle East developments give clear evidence of the U.S. understanding of the situation and rekindle hope that Washington will now be taking a different view and will work more seriously and in a more realistic manner to help establish peace.

By Hafiz D. Tuqan

AMONG THE books I read when curfew was imposed on Nablus Friday, Dec. 16, 1988 — that black, bloody day when five Nablus youths were shot dead and more than 10 were injured, three of whom died later — was one put out by the Israeli army.

The book I refer to is *The Carrot and the Stick* by General Shlomo Gazit, translated by Lu'ay Abdoh who was deported by the Israeli authorities some months ago. The 400-page book deals with the early days of occupation. It is not my intention to review the book nor to comment on the contents because I lived through those black, trying days in my capacity as a member of the municipal council and the Nablus Chamber of Commerce. One main subject in the book concerns me and that is "autonomy" which has been on the minds of the Israeli leadership since 1968.

Through my daily pursuit of events occurring in the Israeli political arena as portrayed in the available media, I found out that the idea of imposing autonomy still holds. During the last days of the former two-headed Israeli government, there was much talk about imposing autonomy immediately. In this connection,

there was an Israeli press report that Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin had arrived last November at a secret understanding, as the intifada flared up, to give autonomy to the people of the occupied territories.

According to this agreement, autonomy would take place in 1989 and establishment of this rule would be in the eastern sector of Jerusalem. In addition, the Israeli media reported the movements of Likud's Moshe Arens and Labour's Gad Ya'acobi and Moshe Shahal, who presented the subject of autonomy before the former cabinet in its last days.

I shall now mention briefly what General Gazit said about autonomy 20 years ago: "On June 29, 1968, the prime minister, Levi Eshkol, held a discussion with Moshe Sasson, who was entrusted with holding contacts with West Bank personalities regarding an autonomy idea. Sasson was given detailed directions on presenting the said plan to those personalities in a positive and accepted manner."

(Sasson actually held several talks with mayors in the southern region of the West Bank.) What those lines convey to us is that the Israeli political leadership has been trying to impose autonomy all these years.

A few weeks ago, the Civil Administration in Nablus renewed its contacts with me after the cessation of such relations when I left the mayoralty on March 3, 1988. On that day, I submitted by resignation to the administration which then refused it. Since that time, I have not gone to the municipality nor have I performed any work connected with the municipality. The meeting at the Civil Administration office lasted for two hours, at the end of which I made it very clear to the governor that I was determined not to go back to being mayor, in answer to his request, that my refusal is based on principles and that there is no need to waste time on details.

The impression I got during that meeting and afterwards was that the question went beyond the Nablus mayoralty. The aim was to enforce autonomy. If it could work in Nablus, then enforcement in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza would be easy. Why else the return to the subject of the municipality at this particular time?

The authorities seemed to imagine that imposing autonomy would be a counter-attack to the Palestinian peace initiative and that this would free their necks from the Palestinian peace yoke, and thus bar the creation of the

Palestinian state on what remains of Palestinian territory. All this after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's recognition of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 at the PNC congress held in Algiers, in his address to the UN General Assembly in Geneva, and in the press conference that forced the American administration to have a dialogue with the PLO, which actually took place in the Tunisian capital.

If the Israeli leadership think they are able to impose autonomy now and that they will succeed in what they failed to do 20 years ago, they are mistaken.

Do they imagine that after the intifada has entered its second year, after the loss of 303 martyrs, after 20,000 injuries by bullets, beatings and suffocation from tear-gas, after 20,000 prisoners have been taken, 138 homes have been destroyed and 32 people from the West Bank and Gaza have been deported (Israel Ministry of Defence figures up till December — the commissioner-general of UNRWA in Vienna gives the figures as 313 killed, 20,000 injured, 58 per cent below 15 years of age), do they believe that after all this repression, after all the success the PLO has achieved in the world, after recognition of the Palestinian state by many coun-

tries, and after embassies have been opened — do they imagine they would be able to enforce an autonomy refused beforehand, not matter what shape or form it takes?

We address the new Israeli government and tell them that the intifada has created a new situation from all sorts of repression for 21 years. Men, women and children have gone through various forms of inhuman treatment day and night. I witnessed many such incidents during my tenure as Nablus mayor for two years. So did Colonel Rami Yadin, the former governor of Nablus, when I accompanied dozens of old men, women and children to his office to enable them to report the inhuman practices they had suffered. I still keep copies of written protest I used to send to Colonel Yadin.

If it is possible, after all these practices, that any Palestinian would accept Israeli domination?

Lately, some rational voices from realistic Israelis such as Ephraim Sneh have been heard. He says that Israel is now faced with a new situation where past forms do not fit — the commissioner-general of UNRWA in Vienna gives the figures as 313 killed, 20,000 injured, 58 per cent below 15 years of age. Do they believe that after all this destructive course will be the loser. The analogies are numerous.

The writer is the former mayor of Nablus. This article is reprinted from the Israeli newspaper, *The Jerusalem Post*.

Autonomy: A stillborn idea

Editorial by Hafiz D. Tuqan

Jerusalem (and declared all such measures "invalid") and deplored "the failure of Israel to show any regard for the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council..."

Resolution 446, passed March 22, 1979, deplored Israel's establishment of settlements on occupied territories as "a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace." The vote was 12-0-3, with the U.S., Britain and Norway abstaining.

Resolution 469, May 20, 1980, "strongly deplores Israel's violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention in its expulsions of the mayors of Hebron and Halhul." The vote was 14-0-1, with the U.S. abstaining.

Resolution 478, passed August 20, 1980, censured Israel for annexing Jerusalem on July 30, declared the action "null and void" and called on the few countries maintaining embassies in Jerusalem to move them to Tel Aviv where the United States and most other nations had their legations. The United States abstained in the 14-0-1 vote.

Resolutions 487 and 497, unanimously passed June 19 and December 17, 1981, "strongly" condemned Israel's air raid on June 7 on Iraq's nuclear facility at Baghdad and condemned Israel's December 14 annexation of Syria's Golan Heights, captured in 1967.

Resolutions 515 and 517, passed July 29, and August 4, 1982, demanded that Israel lift its siege of Beirut and allow the distribution of supplies to the civilian population, and censured Israel for then refusing to lift its siege. The vote was 14-0-1 for both resolutions, with the U.S. abstaining both times.

Finally, the Security Council has been busy during the uprising in the occupied territories. Even the United States acquiesced in some of the condemnations as a result of Israel's extraordinarily brutal behaviour. Thus:

Ozal's leadership style triggers concern

By John Owen-Davies

Reuter

ANKARA — The independent

leadership style of Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal is causing concern following the resignation of his deputy and a bureaucratic shake-up.

Ozal, in the midst of possibly his worst political crisis since taking office in 1983 after three years of army rule, is regarded as an autocratic by sections of his loose-knit party and meddlesome by some senior economic bureaucrats and bankers.

For the first time, senior members of the ruling Motherland Party are speaking out about what they view as Ozal's almost Ottoman-style leadership and the power he invests in his family.

Ozal, a 61-year-old conservative who has applied to take Turkey into the European Community, said the resignation of Deputy Prime Minister Kaya Erdem would not affect his party.

But one Motherland deputy, described by the mass-circulation daily Hurriyet as a person who had held high party posts, told reporters:

"We are not able to express ourselves. Although Ozal is still the party leader he has suffered many losses. Now there are objections from the deputies ... from time to

time they reach a dimension which threatens to split the party.

"One day something will happen and we will face very serious consequences," the deputy said.

Ozal is viewed widely as the only man who can keep intact the Motherland Party, embracing politicians from the Muslim right to Western-style liberals. The party won 292 seats in the 450-seat parliament in the November 1987 general election.

Erdem, 60, was a long-time friend who helped to heal party rifts and acted as a conduit to opposition parties.

He stepped down last week after Bulent Semiler, 34, quit as head of the state-run Konbank following a row with Erdem involving a businessman charged with an \$80-million bank swindle.

Semiler was one of the Western-trained "princes" brought home by Ozal to oversee economic liberalisation in predominantly-Muslim Turkey.

In a separate move last week Ozal's younger brother, State Minister Yusuf Ozal, 49, ordered at least 55 transfers from the Treasury, Treasury sources said.

They said Treasury Undersecretary Yavuz Canevi, an old-style conservative official, immediately went on holiday and was likely to resign because he

would really have problems. He is an able banker and a respected international negotiator," said a Western diplomat who follows the economy.

Saracoglu, 40, who wants a tight monetary policy to curb nearly 80 per cent inflation, was angered last October when Turgut Ozal decontrolled bank deposit interest rates to prevent a foreign exchange run on the Turkish lira.

Independent political sources said Yusuf Ozal, more liberal minded on the economy than Canevi, would not have acted without the prime minister's consent.

"The latest developments have caused concern," a senior Istanbul banker said.

"I have received calls from Western bankers outside Turkey worried that events could lead to instability on the economy. I tried to calm the bankers down but the sooner the economic and political situation gets calmer the better," he added.

Banking sources say Yusuf Ozal has been at odds over policy with Central Bank Governor Rusdu Saracoglu, regarded as the best of the "princes" — a description used frequently by news-papers.

"If Saracoglu was to go then we

would raise the prices of their commodities, many of which had been lying in stores in Jordan long before the government decision came into effect.

This situation prompts one to

believe that the private sector, which monopolises the importation and distribution of these books, does not appreciate nor can it live up to the expectations of being the only party with the right to such transactions. Should this trend continue, one can only become

convinced that the time has come for the public sector to intervene and assume the task of importing and distributing books in Jordan at reasonable prices.

Books, which certainly are not a luxury commodity should be tightly considered as essential to the public as food and meat.

It is indeed astonishing and regrettable to see the prices of books being hiked in some cases by 100 per cent against a rise in foreign currency exchange rate of only 30 per cent. One would conclude that importers of foreign books, had seized the opportunity of differences in exchange rates in order

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EN BREF

CEE: Henry Plumb à Amman

Henry Plumb, président du parlement européen, est arrivé mercredi avec une délégation à Amman, où il a eu des entretiens avec le Roi Hussein, auquel il a apporté son soutien pour ses efforts en vue d'un règlement pacifique dans le conflit proche-oriental. M. Plumb arrivait d'Israël et des territoires occupés. Devant la Knesset, il avait appelé Israël à se retirer des territoires occupés et à engager la négociation.

Chamli, tout en continuant à exclure le dialogue avec l'OLP, a toutefois cédé du terrain en acceptant le principe d'un rôle des Nations-Unies dans les négociations de paix. Mais il a précisé qu'il ne pouvait s'agir que de "pourparlers directs avec la partie arabe", écartant implicitement une conférence internationale. Par ailleurs, Yasser Arafat a eu des entretiens lundi au Caire avec une délégation du Conseil de l'Europe, et a estimé que l'Europe a un rôle à jouer dans le processus de paix.

Amal-Hezbollah: pas de répit

Les miliciens chiites pro-syriens d'Amal et le Hezbollah pro-iranien continuent de se battre au Sud de Saïda, dans le dernier fief du Hezbollah, à la frontière de la zone dite "de sécurité" instaurée par Israël au Sud-Liban. Au moins 126 personnes ont trouvé la mort dans ces combats qui font rage depuis le 1er janvier. Damas et Téhéran tentent de réconcilier les deux milices, après une semaine de combats particulièrement meurtriers autour des positions du Hezbollah, où Amal a déployé quelque 1.000 combattants soutenus par des chars T-54 pour prendre le contrôle de Jubah, à 16 kilomètres au Sud de Saïda, où sont encerclés 500 militaires du Hezbollah.

Aide américaine: Egypte et Israël d'abord

Israël et l'Egypte restent les principaux bénéficiaires de l'aide américaine à l'étranger dans le projet de budget pour le Département d'Etat en 1990, présente lundi. Sur un total de 19,4 milliards de dollars pour le département d'Etat, Israël reste le plus important bénéficiaire, avec 3 milliards de dollars, dont 1,8 au titre de l'aide militaire, sans changement par rapport à l'année dernière. L'Egypte vient derrière avec 2,276 milliards, dont 1,301 d'aide militaire. 2,288 milliards avaient été demandés pour l'année budgétaire 1989. Seule modification importante dans la répartition de l'aide au Proche-Orient, l'aide économique au Liban fait un bon, passant de 300.000 dollars à 14 millions pour 1990. Les deux nouvelles forces de maintien de l'ONU, le groupe d'observateurs militaires des Nations Unies pour l'Iran et l'Irak, et le groupe d'assistance des Nations Unies pour la transition en Namibie recevront respectivement 20 millions et 50 millions de dollars.

Arens: non à l'OLP

Moshe Arens, ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, a estimé, lundi à Paris, que l'OLP était une "organisation terroriste" et que "toute légitimité" qui lui était accordée ne contribuerait pas au processus de paix". M. Arens a indiqué avoir fait partie de son sentiment à Roland Dumas, ministre français des Affaires étrangères, lors de l'entretien que les deux hommes ont eu en marge de la conférence sur les armes chimiques, à la suite de la décision de la France d'élèver la mission de l'OLP au rang de "délégation générale de Palestine".

Vous écrivez?

Le Jourdain recherche des collaborateurs en free-lance, avec idées originales d'enquêtes et reportages. Anglais accepté. Contacter François Duroux, Jordan Times, 667171.

Le saviez-vous? Frémissement israélien

Sous la croute du "front des refus," l'opinion israélienne est en train d'évoluer: un sondage publié fin décembre posait la question "êtes-vous pour ou contre une négociation avec Arafat, à condition qu'il renonce réellement au terrorisme?" Résultat: oui à 54% contre non à 44%, sans opinion 2%. Il y a un an, la même question ne recueillait que 25% de "oui." Par ailleurs, une manifestation de "paix maintenant" a récemment rassemblé des dizaines de milliers de personnes sous la pluie à Tel Aviv. On murmure à Jérusalem que Shamir ne croit plus guère à l'annexion des territoires occupés. (D'après l'Evenement).

La représentation de l'OLP élevée au rang d'ambassade de Palestine

Arafat hisse les couleurs à Amman

La visite en Jordanie du chef de l'OLP, Mr. Yasser Arafat, a été couronnée samedi par l'élévation au rang d'ambassade de la représentation palestinienne à Amman, dans un geste de reconnaissance, sans ambiguïté, avec la Jordanie de l'Etat palestinien indépendant.

Le chef de l'OLP a estimé que l'ouverture d'une ambassade de Palestine à Amman était un "cadeau du Roi Hussein au peuple de l'Intifada." Après avoir hussé le drapeau palestinien, il a affirmé espérer que les drapeaux jordaniens et palestiniens flotteront un jour, côté à côté, sur Jérusalem libérée.

Mettant l'accent sur "les relations privilégiées entre les peuples

dépendant."

La Jordanie avait rompu le 31 juillet ses "liens légaux et administratifs" avec la Cisjordanie, rattachée au Royaume depuis 1950, et occupée par Israël en 1967, afin de "mettre en valeur l'unité palestinienne sur la terre de Palestine."

Cette rupture, selon ces mêmes milieux, a été à l'origine de la réunion du Conseil National Palestinien (CNP) — parlement en exil), qui a proclamé le 15 novembre l'Etat palestinien dès l'établissement de l'Etat indépendant.

Dans les milieux politiques jordaniens, on indique que le geste d'Amman est "une preuve supplémentaire de l'absence de toute ambition sur dessin de la Jordanie à l'égard de la Cisjordanie et de la bande de Gaza, qu'elle reconnaît comme territoires de l'Etat palestinien indépendant."

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Mettant l'accent sur "les relations privilégiées entre les peuples

centrale palestinienne dans toutes les initiatives politiques qu'elle entreprendrait, ajoute-t-on dans ces mêmes milieux.

Le Roi Hussein, qui a eu deux séries d'entretiens vendredi et samedi à Amman avec le chef de l'OLP, a affirmé à la Jordanie soutient M. Arafat et les frères palestiniens "de toutes ses forces jusqu'à la réalisation de leur indépendance."

De source jordanienne informée, on indique qu'Amman a fait part à l'OLP de son intention de la soutenir dans sa demande de réunion d'un sommet arabe. Le porte-parole de l'OLP, M. Ahmad Abdel Rahman, avait affirmé Samedi à l'AFP que l'OLP estime "nécessaire" la tenue d'un sommet arabe afin de soutenir l'initiative politique de l'OLP. (Randa Habib, AFP)



Avant tout, un symbole du soutien jordanien à l'OLP.

Conférence de Paris sur les armes chimiques

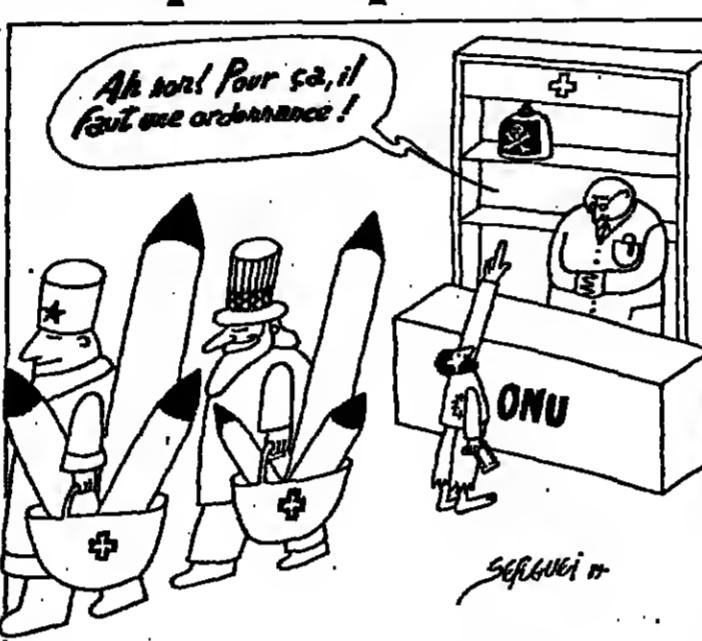
La "bombe atomique du pauvre"

La première conférence internationale sur l'interdiction des armes chimiques, ouverte samedi à Paris, a été marquée par une polémique entre pays industrialisés et pays en voie de développement. Selon ces derniers, la "bombe atomique du pauvre" ne peut être dissociée de la vraie, réservée aux riches.

Les 141 pays représentés au Palais de l'UNESCO devaient adopter mercredi une déclaration condamnant l'usage (convention de Genève de 1925), mais aussi la fabrication et la détention d'armes chimiques (cf. page 1). Les premiers intervenants, notamment François Mitterrand et le Secrétaire d'Etat américain Georges Shultz, ont plaidé pour un bannissement sans appel de ces armes. Le président français a assuré, au moins en ce qui concerne la France, que "le désarmement chimique n'est pas dissociable des autres formes de désarmement, notamment nucléaire."

Mais ces assurances ne semblent pas avoir dissipé les appréhensions des pays du tiers-monde, qui redoutent d'être sacrifiés aux intérêts. Deux questions restent toujours sans réponse mercredi: l'usine de Rabat fabrique-t-elle des armes chimiques, comme l'affirment les Etats-Unis? Les deux Mig libyens abattus il y a une semaine par des chasseurs américains menaçaient-ils vraiment ces derniers?

Sur le premier point, Tripoli



Libye-USA: chassé-croisé

En marge de la conférence de Paris, Libyens et Américains continuaient à croiser le fer par médias interposés. Deux questions restent toujours sans réponse mercredi: l'usine de Rabat fabrique-t-elle des armes chimiques, comme l'affirment les Etats-Unis? Les deux Mig libyens abattus il y a une semaine par des chasseurs américains menaçaient-ils vraiment ces derniers?

Sur le premier point, Tripoli continue à soutenir qu'on ne produit que des médicaments à Rabat. Mais la presse internationale, invitée à visiter le site, n'a pas pu pénétrer à l'intérieur des bâtiments. La Libye a demandé à Paris l'interdiction des armes chimiques à la veille de la conférence. Même son de cloche du côté irakien:

Chimique contre nucléaire? Tel n'est pas l'avis des Occidentaux, qui considèrent que l'arme atomique relève de la catégorie des armes de dissuasion. L'arme chimique, elle, est considérée comme une arme d'usage courant, comme l'attestent les derniers conflits régionaux (Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iran-Irak).

Les experts estiment généralement à environ une vingtaine de pays détenteurs, bien

sont les Etats-Unis d'être "le plus grand producteur et le plus grand réservoir d'armes chimiques." Washington, qui repousse une invitation libyenne à des conversations directes, persiste à ne pas écarter une éventuelle action militaire sur Rabat.

Sur la destruction des Mig, les explications du Pentagone laissent des zones d'ombre, n'apportant pas vraiment la preuve que les chasseurs libyens avaient des intentions hostiles: à aucun moment, ils n'ont pu vouloir tirer (les radars de tir n'ont pas été dirigés sur les avions américains, contrairement à des informations diffusées aussitôt après l'incident).

Conférence mardi, cette prolifération "est la conséquence de la possession par Israël de l'arme nucléaire, génératrice d'un sentiment d'in sécurité dans la région. La Jordanie croit au besoin de mettre en œuvre le désarmement d'une façon juste et équilibrée, qui garantisse le droit de tous les Etats à la sécurité et ne donne pas à un Etat ou à un groupe d'Etats l'avantage sur les autres".

que seuls à ce jour les Etats-Unis et l'URSS reconnaissent officiellement disposer de stocks chimiques. Ils constatent notamment un fort accroissement de l'achat de pesticides par divers pays du Moyen-Orient, et insistent sur la facilité de fabrication d'armes chimiques.

Selon le ministre jordanien des Affaires étrangères, Marwan Al Qasem, qui s'est adressé à la

conférence mardi, cette prolifération "est la conséquence de la possession par Israël de l'arme nucléaire, génératrice d'un sentiment d'in sécurité dans la région. La Jordanie croit au besoin de mettre en œuvre le désarmement d'une façon juste et équilibrée, qui garantisse le droit de tous les Etats à la sécurité et ne donne pas à un Etat ou à un groupe d'Etats l'avantage sur les autres".

Et reste, personne ne le sait.

Mystères

Selon les professeurs qui ont écrit à L'Ecole, une simplification du français écrit lui donnerait plus de chances de résister à l'invasion des anglicismes. "Il est

décourageant, pour ceux qui font l'apprentissage d'une langue, d'apprendre une règle pour découvrir ensuite que les exceptions la rendent toute relative." Prenez par exemple le cas des doubles consonnes, calibre des écoliers français: pourquoi tradition et fonction donnent-ils les adjectifs traditionnel et fonctionnel, avec deux "n"? Pourquoi rationnalité, qui n'en prend qu'un, le double quand il se mue en rationnel — avec deux "r"...

L'Ecole cite pèle-mêle les accents saugrenus, les "x" plurIELS et les "ph", fourvoyeurs de la phonétique. Si le "o" de trône et

de zone se prononcent de la même façon, pourquoi le premier porte-t-il un chapeau? De quel droit les choux et les cailloux font-ils la nique aux fous et aux minous? Quelles sont ces fâmes dans nos phrases? Le Journal, qui en perd son latin, propose encore la simplification des mots de racine grecque, comme rythme, qui pourrait s'écrire "ritme."

Certains enseignants soulignent que d'autres langues latines, telles que l'espagnol, l'italien ou le roumain ont été "nettoyées" de la sorte, sans que le sens des mots ou leurs nuances aient à en souffrir.

Dans le camp adverse, on crie

au massacre. Telle Jacqueline de Romilly, fraîchement élue à l'Académie française et férue d'orthymologie. "L'orthographe d'un mot révèle son sens, son histoire et ses liaisons syntaxiques," plaide-t-elle. André Frogsard, académicien lui aussi, trouve aux mots "une sonorité, une texture, un certain mystère," qui pimentent leur charme et qui doivent être préservés. Plus généralement, on défend le rattachement des mots à leur origine latine ou grecque. Mais que dire par exemple de "personne," qui vient du latin "persona"? Mystère, mystère... (F.D., d'après Herald Tribune)

Une première en Jordanie: cinq femmes (quatre Jordaniennes, une Américaine) brossent en six tableaux le comportement de leurs concubins dans des situations de la vie moderne. Pas de références culturelles, mais au contraire une volonté de retrouver l'essence de la psychologie féminine, au-delà des frontières. Un trait commun relié ces bourgeois à l'heure du thé, ces femmes de ménage, ces jeunes filles, etc... La mise en scène dépoluée de Susan Darwazeh, des costumes couleur de muraille visent à éliminer les scorces pour mieux souligner l'essentiel: l'esprit. Des voix "off" mettent en relief le décalage entre l'expression et la pensée, les contradictions et les difficultés rencontrées par ces femmes "universelles". Deux d'entre elles, qui aiment le même homme sans se l'avouer, essaient ainsi de s'utiliser mutuellement pour atteindre leur but, par des moyens détournés. Consciemment et inconsciemment. Une situation cruelle, qui pimente l'effet trag-comique provoqué par la voix "off". Changement de décor: dans une société verrouillée, une femme se bat contre son entourage et contre sa propre peur pour sortir de son cercueil. L'auteur, Haya Hussein s'inspire de situations tirées de Virginia Woolf, Peter Schäffer, Jean Genet ("Les bonnes") et de son propre univers.

"Shades of Eve" (en anglais), mis en scène par Sawan Darwazeh, avec Haya Hussein, Sami Atiyeh, Sama Qubain, Sanchita Wijesooriya. Centre Culturel Royal, mardi 17, mercredi 18 et jeudi 19 à 20h00. Billets (2 JD) en vente au

RCC.

Paris: un pas de plus

Le bureau de l'OLP à Paris sera élevé au rang de "délégation générale de Palestine", sans toutefois que lui soit accordé de statut diplomatique, a annoncé le jeudi 5 janvier François Mitterrand. Le chef de l'Etat a expliqué que la France ne reconnaît pas l'Etat qui dispose d'un territoire, il n'était pas pour qui il ne discuterait pas avec M. Arafat comme avec n'importe quel responsable d'un peuple dans le monde.

Interrogé sur l'éventualité d'une rencontre avec le chef de l'OLP, M. Mitterrand a déclaré qu'il ne voyait pas pourquoi il ne discuterait pas avec M. Arafat comme avec n'importe quel responsable d'un peuple dans le monde.

La décision française a suscité la déception de l'ambassadeur d'Israël en France, M. Ovadia Sofer, qui a cependant considéré comme "une bonne chose en soi" que les privilégiés diplomatiques ne soient pas accordés à l'OLP. Représentant de l'OLP, M. Ibrahim Souss, s'est quant à lui félicité de l'initiative française, qui, selon lui, signifie que la France prend "acte politiquement de la proclamation d'un Etat palestinien". Il y voit une "reconnaissance implicite" de cet Etat.

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Madame Tussaud's — beyond wax, into the space age

By Maggie Jackson
The Associated Press

LONDON — A big toy leopard in a pink tutu sits near the desk of Madame Tussaud's chief executive, but it isn't made of the stuff that attracts 2.5 million visitors a year.

Michael Herbert's office-mate is a fibreglass leftover from a children's exhibit, and a sign of the company's future. For Tussauds isn't just into wax anymore.

The company, whose waxworks were brought from Paris to London 100 years ago by the enterprising Madame, has bought a medieval castle and a set of caves, owns one theme park and plans to build another for \$90 million. It's also delving into non-wax Disney-style animated figures.

Tussauds hasn't forsaken its roots. Its wax statues pop up at new ventures and the original exhibition has been London's top fee-paying tourist site for two years.

To a celebrity, few accolades are greater than an invitation to pose for a Tussaud effigy, and to the public, it's a true sign of the passage of fame when a wax statue gets taken to the storeroom.

Its chamber of horrors, with its freshly guillotined heads and disembowelled Jack the Ripper victims have given generations of children sleepless nights.

"Madame Tussaud's is something we rather crudely say you would visit three times in your life; as a child, a parent and perhaps a grandparent," says Herbert, a gentle man who clearly delights in the fun side to his

business, like his leopard.

"Wax exhibitions need a turnover of people," he said in an interview, noting that more than half of Madame Tussaud's visitors come from abroad. "Therefore it's no use going to set up a wax exhibition in somewhere like Cleveland, Ohio, or even Chicago."

Marie Tussaud, an accomplished sculptress in Paris, inherited the waxworks from the uncle who trained her. She had made deathmasks of guillotine victims including Marie Antoinette, but finding post-revolutionary France too chaotic for business, she moved to England in 1802.

A marketing whiz in her time, she guaranteed new audiences for the waxworks by touring Britain for 33 years before settling in London at age 74. Here she displayed her last work — a scowling self-portrait in spectacles and black bonnet which is among the 350 figures presently on display in the permanent exhibition on the Marylebone road.

After her death, the exhibit grew somewhat old-fashioned, Herbert said, but tourism boosted revenue in the 1960s and it has flourished in recent years with stepped-up marketing.

"Rock circus" continues the Disney-style animation work begun with an exhibition near Windsor Castle, on the outskirts of Bedford, would be impossible without Pearson's backing, says Herbert, who is a director of a U.S. theme park company and sees great potential in this sector in Britain.

Expansions aside, Tussauds' planned amusement park at Woburn Abbey, the 18th-century stately home of the Duke of Bedford, would be impossible without Pearson's backing, says Herbert, who is a director of a U.S. theme park company and sees great potential in this sector in Britain.

"After all, we're still a very small company, with turnover of \$55 million," he said. "To do this alone would really be sticking your neck out."

Next year, Tussauds will open a London exhibition of both wax and non-wax animated figures representing rock stars.

Tussauds — the company as opposed to Madame Tussaud's, the waxworks — first expanded in 1970 with an exhibition in Amsterdam that has been so successful the company hopes to move to a bigger site.

It bought the wooley hole caves in western England, a popular tourist spot, in 1973 and was attempting to buy the Chessington zoo, now the Chessington World of Adventures, in 1978.

"What we're doing (with animation) is enhancing the illusion."



The Americanisation of Indonesia's elite

By Bill Tarrant
Reuter

JAKARTA — Indonesia's newly-emerging middle class is tuning in to "L.A. law" and slick advertising with the return of commercial television to the traditionalist country after a seven-year break.

The government in 1981 banned advertising on the country's only television station, state-run TVRI, saying it was creating pernicious consumerism in a country with a per capita income of about \$450 a year.

Now a new subscription television station, RCTI, has been given a 20-year licence that allows it to broadcast commercials along with the American-style diet it serves up to Jakarta's elite.

"Subscription television gets around the problem of poor people watching ads for Mercedes

Benz cars and getting envious about the rich," said one advertising executive.

RCTI, directed and partly owned by President Suharto's son Bambang Trihatmojo, charges \$18 a month for its range of sport, music, cartoons, night movies and top-rated American series such as "L.A. law."

It is allowed to broadcast only in the Jakarta area but the government has said it might grant licences for commercial television in six other cities if the new station is a success.

RCTI's scrambled signal is decoded by a device in the subscriber's home. All programmes are in English but the station will begin dubbing and sub-titling next year when it finishes an \$85-million studio.

"This is the last major non-communist capital without a com-

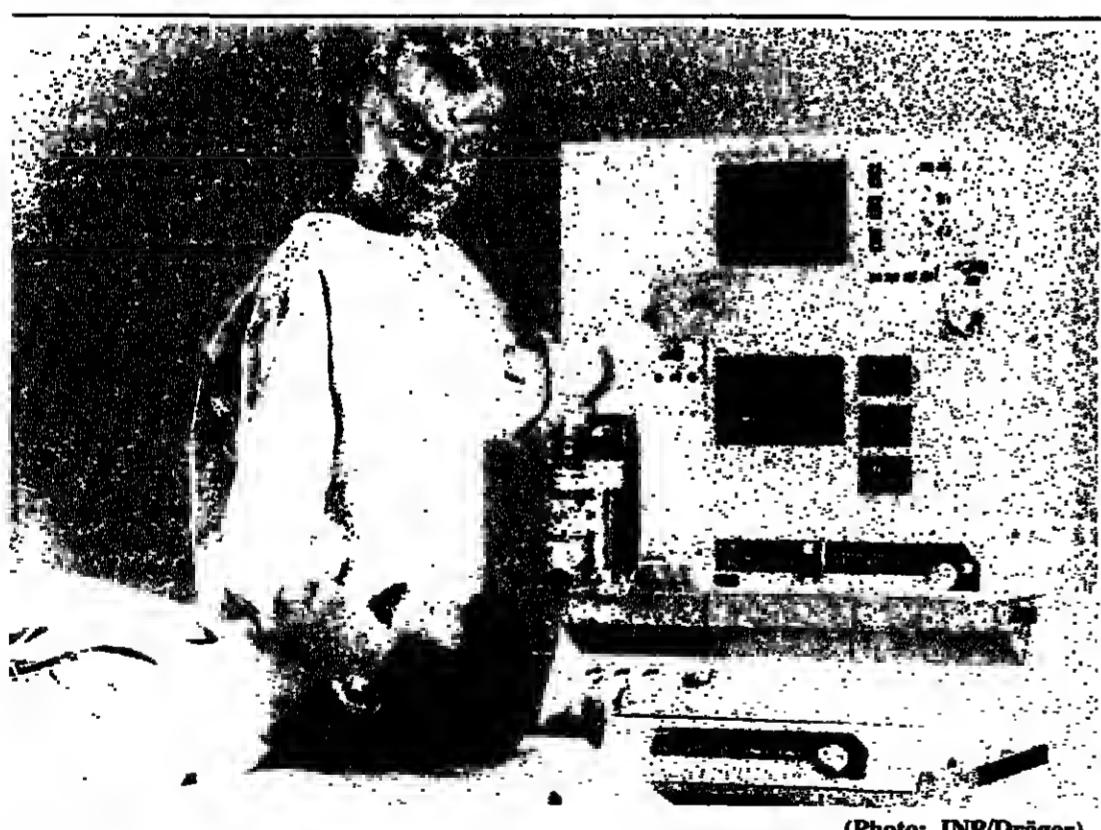
mercial advertising station," said general manager Peter Langlois in an interview.

The station has so far signed up 50,000 subscribers and eventually hopes to have 140,000 — about two per cent of the capital's population.

TVRI will take a quarter of subscriber revenue in addition to getting about \$650,000 a year for selling news to the station. Langlois, former manager of an NBC station in Sacramento, California, describes the relationship as "more partnership than competitor."

Commercial television is already having a big impact on the fledgling advertising and film industry.

RCTI expects to boost at least half the estimated total of \$125 million spent on advertising in Indonesia in 1987.



FEWER RISKS: "Cicero" is the name given to this new anaesthesia system from the Federal Republic of Germany. Anaesthetics tech-

nology in general has been coordinated in accordance with the most modern aspects. Approval has been applied for.

'Cicero' makes operations easier

LÜBECK (INP) — The north German firm — Drägerwerk in Lübeck has developed a future-oriented anaesthetic respiration unit. Anaesthesia in medicine is almost as old as the history of medicine itself. Nonetheless, it is still a "sensitive key area" during an operation — especially on account of human failure and overworking staff.

The Drägerwerk AG now presents a complete "integrated system working place for the anaesthetist." The latest scientific recognitions and technologies have contributed to this modern project — experience and advice from more than one thousand doctors asked in Europe, Asia and America.

"Cicero" is the name given to the unit from the Federal Republic of Germany, which incorporates all the components usually required for carrying out anaesthesia such as gas dosage and type

of anaesthetic, respiration unit and communication controller. The new unit is suitable for grown-ups, children and babies. A special feature is the alarm and data management system. This enables critical changes to be identified more rapidly so that they can be remedied. Exhausting monitoring duties and routine recordings are dispersed with the doctor and the operating staff.

In a modern clinic, the working place of the anaesthetist still comprises a combination of various units. Up to 50 cables and tubes connect the patient with the units and the various systems with one another. This "confusion" increasingly calls for the attention of the doctor and nurse. As a result, handling errors are frequently unavoidable. Thanks to "Cicero," the Lübeck manufacturers say, attention can be given to what is really essential: with a

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

RESTAURANT CHINA The first & best Chinese Restaurant in Jordan 1st Circle, Jabal Amman, near Ahliyyah Girls School Take away available Open daily 12:00-3:30 p.m. 6:30-Midnight Tel. 638968	MANDARIN RESTAURANT The only typical Chinese cuisine in Amman. Chinese Flaming pot is available Take away available Open daily 12:00-15:30 18:00-23:30 Wadi Saqra Road - near Traffic Bridge Amman, Jordan Tel. 661922	CHEN'S CHINESE RESTAURANT Mecca Street, Yarmouk Engineers' Housing Estate, near Kilo Supermarket Mongolian Barbecue for Lunch Friday only Tel: 618214 Come and taste our specialties Open daily 12:00-3:30 p.m. 6:30-Midnight Tel. 661922	TAIWAN TOURISMO Authentic Chinese Food Korean Bar-B-Q Charcoal Flaming Pot Take-away service Open daily Noon - 3:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. - midnight Location: Near 3rd Circle opposite Akhal Hospital Tel: 641093	Kashmir Restaurant FIRST CLASS INDIAN RESTAURANT Special Executive Lunches Take away service available Open Daily 12:30-3:30 pm 7:30-11:30 pm After the Holiday Inn hotel Towards 3rd circle Tel: 659519 659520
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Nibbling at the edges of the harvest of death

By David Storey
Reuter

BANGKOK — The pilot held the helicopter steady a few feet above the ground, the blast of its rotors whipping the fronds of a banana tree and fuzzy-ended stalks of giant pampas grass into a frenzy.

Eight men carrying assault rifles leapt from the cabin, scattering into the undergrowth on the steep hillside, then, as the helicopter drew away, made ready for a small patch of flowers nearby.

They wreaked havoc, slashing at the flowers with sticks and slicing off their bulbous seed pods with hunting knives.

It's open season on opium poppies in Thailand.

The latest poppy-busting expedition was near this village in Loei province, within 20 kilometres of the border with Laos and on the edge of the golden triangle, the biggest single source for the world's opium and its heroin derivative.

Elsewhere in northern Thailand, particularly in the Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai provinces bordering Burma, the paramilitary border patrol police and other forces are scouring wooded ridges and limestone escarpments during this prime growing season.

Although clashes with growers are rare, the troopers go armed because guns are still part of everyday life in these hilly areas and the big men behind the trade can be ruthless in protecting their investments.

The mission of destruction, coupled with a campaign of providing profitable replacement crops like cabbage or coffee, has been a success in Thailand.

Helped by personal intervention from the Thai royal family and aid from abroad, substitution

projects have mushroomed in the hills and domestic opium production has fallen from 200 tonnes to little more than 20 tonnes in a decade.

But raids like those in Loei province, even coupled with record seizures of heroin crossing Thailand last year, are only nibbling at the fringes of production in the golden triangle — an area including parts of Burma, Laos and Thailand — where weather conditions were excellent in 1988.

In the context of the region Thailand has become, in the words of one narcotics agent, a sideshow. "It's important for what goes on around it and what goes through it," he said.

"The growing conditions are as good as we have seen in many years. We have to assume the army is less involved in eradication work than in previous years, if they're involved at all," said one international agent.

"We assume it's going to be a very handsome crop," said the official, who declined to be identified.

He said there could be an increase of as much as 20 per cent in the flow of heroin from the region because of the lack of controls in Burma. But, as with all figures on the illicit opium trade, this was no more than an educated guess.

Although the United States last year openly accused Laotian officials of involvement in opium production, 1989 began on a more optimistic note. A U.S. team visited Vientiane in the first week of January promising aid to eradicate opium growth as part of a general improvement in relations between Washington and Indochina.

The United Nations fund for drug abuse control is also hoping to establish its first programme in Laos since the late 1970s, aimed at introducing other profitable crops to hill tribes now growing opium.

Top officers, including the commander of the narcotics unit,

were replaced, leaving a lack of skill and experience.

Latest available Burmese official reports said 40,000 out of 70,000 acres of poppies were destroyed in the 1988-89 opium production season.

International experts in Bangkok say this appeared a very high estimate. They said at least 1,000 tonnes of raw opium was produced in Burma that year, with the Burma Communist Party and Shan state insurgents under warlord Khun Sa producing and refining the bulk of it.

And this year?

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Azraq oasis



Azraq castle

The slow death of a desert oasis

By Alistair Lyon
Reuter

AZRAQ — Kicking up dust, buffalo canter through low brush at this wetland oasis in Jordan's eastern desert, once a world-famous sanctuary for migrant birds.

The buffalo, descended from domestic animals, and scores of wild horses, roam the shrinking marshes, but few birds now stop at Azraq en route between Europe and Africa.

According to Anis Muasher, president of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, the oasis is dying because of over-pumping of water to meet Amman's growing demand.

Unless this is curbed, Azraq, 90 kilometres east of the capital, may become an early casualty of Jordan's looming water crisis, say Muasher and other experts.

"By 2005 our renewable water resources will be running out," said Elias Salameh, head of Jordan University's Water Research Centre. "New supplies will have to come from fossil (non-replenishable) water or non-conventional sources like desalination or recycling."

Some wintered there and others breed among its giant reeds, prickly sea rush and tamarisk bushes, along with snakes, frogs, fish and lizards. Asiatic jackals, red fox, wolves and striped hyenas are still seen, though wild boar have vanished.

Experts say overpumping has

lowered the water table by three metres in the past three years in some of the Jordan Water Authority's 15 wells, and some springs have dried up completely.

The Azraq area discharges 15 to 16 million cubic metres of water a year. The water authority is pumping that amount and local farmers are using another six million for irrigation and fishponds," said Omar Rimawi, a Jordan University hydrologist.

The society will do what it can to keep Azraq alive until Amman finds other water sources," Muasher said. "We are trying to keep the vegetation alive so that we don't lose the species."

Only 10 years ago the pools, marshes, water meadows and salt dunes of the Azraq wetland reserve harboured about 300 bird species, over half of them migrants.

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Experts say overpumping has

The government formed a committee 18 months ago to try to halve the amount pumped from the area and Muasher said it had ordered the closure of several unlicensed wells. The European Community is funding an investigation of Azraq aquifers.

But few other sources are readily available to quench the thirst of Amman's fast-growing population.

Rimawi said rationing last summer showed consumption had already exceeded the city's supply. "Jordan is on the edge of a crisis. By the end of the century it will be a big problem."

Water and Irrigation Minister Ahmad Dakhaqan said this month water potential would have to be increased by at least 10 per cent.

This year Jordan hopes to start work on damming the Yarmouk River, its only major untapped surface water resource. The long-planned Wahdah (unity) Dam, straddling the border with Syria, should provide 50 million cubic metres of water a year for Amman and 20 million for the northern town of Irbid.

A Western development expert who asked not to be named, said this would ease but not solve the problem. He praised Jordan for bringing piped water to more than 80 per cent of its people but said government subsidies were encouraging waste, especially among Jordan Valley farmers.

"The Jordan Valley is a major development success, but they don't use water efficiently. There's a social and cultural bias against charging farmers an economic price for water," he said.

Jordan Valley Authority Director Mohammed Beni Hani said farmers paid about 25 per cent of the system's running cost but denied they were excessive consumers.

He said a pressurised closed-pipe system to replace open canals would be complete by 1995 and the authority was trying to operate, maintain and manage existing systems better.

Experts say much water is lost in Amman's leaky distribution network but household water consumption is lower than in neighbouring Arab capitals and far below Western levels.

A blow to the Third World — a resource drain

The World Bank's sobering new analysis of the distressful debt situation in the developing world has underscored the need for global action to confront the issue.

By Naseem Abdallah

WASHINGTON — The non-oil industrial countries may rejoice at unstable oil prices and optimists may see an imminent turnaround in the world economy, but the developing world has entered a new phase of financial distress that may not be over soon.

The outflow of wealth from the developing to developed countries has reached record levels and may be at least 50 per cent higher in the current year than in previous years.

This emerged from recent statistics released by World Bank. The speed and magnitude of the outflow of wealth from the developing countries in recent years, said the bank, represents a new and significant constraint on their expansion."

Coupled with rising interest rates and the not-so-distant threat of a trade war involving the United States, Japan, Europe and the rest of the world, the resource drain is a serious blow to the Third World. In simple terms, it means that the poorer developing countries will have to forget about catching up with the rest of the world on growth and improvement of living standards.

Now the rising clamour is for the Baker Plan to be modified to give banks greater incentives to lend and the developing countries remain on outstanding debts. Why? An increasing number of economists are persuaded that the debt crisis represents a major risk

Total net Third World payments to industrialised countries are estimated at \$43 billion, up from \$38.10 billion in 1987. When the debt crisis erupted in 1982, developing countries were taking in \$18.20 billion more than they paid out. Now, of course, their debt has almost doubled — to \$1.32 trillion.

The massive transfer of resources from poor to rich countries, which are part of the effort to service that debt, is becoming a major political issue in the Third World. This was acknowledged in the World Bank reports, which observes that "the immense uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the debt crisis, and, in some countries, the sheer size of the debt relative to economic capacity are daunting to all investors, internal and external."

About two-thirds of the total Third World debt is held by private lenders, including banks in the United States, Japan and Western Europe. The other one-third is owed to governments and

to such government-owned lending institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). So the room for manoeuvre — debt forgiveness, rescheduling or new loans — is there. It now remains up to the powers that be to use that opportunity to address the monumental problem.

One billion people are now being added to the human race every twelve years," says the 1988 State of World Population report. But we are consuming world resources even faster than population is growing.



A detail of Garia Mahmoud's "Peasants."

By Michael Gibson
International Herald Tribune

creative faculties were stunted at one stage.

Artistic potential

One of his basic convictions was that every human being has artistic potential, though it may be perverted or destroyed by education. As it happened, the results of this first adventure were so exciting that he decided to take it a step further. Three of the children stayed with him and formed the nucleus of a teaching staff when the school in Harrania was created in 1951. His family fortune was sufficient to allow him to buy land there and build a school of traditional design.

Thus this school was started is remarkable in itself. Wissa Wassef and his wife, Sophie, went on frequent visits to Harrania, then an isolated village on the edge of a canal within sight of the Giza pyramids. Over a period of weeks, they sat down under a tree, struck up conversations and played games with the village children.

School hours are short in Egypt, there being too few teachers, and Ramses and Sophie were obviously both charming and purposeful as they sat in apparent idleness beneath their tree. When a trusting relationship had been established, they asked the children whether they wouldn't like to learn how to weave.

A dozen children, mostly girls, showed an interest and began working regularly. Wissa Wassef dealt directly with the children rather than with their families. When they completed a tapestry they were paid for it. This was a new situation for the children and gave them a tremendous sense of pride. The first time the 12 children were paid they paraded through the village singing an improvised song boasting of their achievement. Later they asked Wissa Wassef to keep the money for them, to invest it in gold and, as they grew up, they used it to build their own mud brick houses when they got married.

It was always a happy venture, Sophie Wissa Wassef says today, though it required great patience. It also required exceptional pedagogical skills and tact. Wissa

A utopian adventure

Wassa was careful not to show the children any art. Instead he would take them on excursions to observe plants and wildlife along the banks of the Nile, into the desert or to the shore near Alexandria. This was intended to develop their own perception of things.

His daughter Yoanna remembers seeing a group of children off at the station. They were going to take the two-hour train ride to Alexandria and at the moment of boarding the train all the girls suddenly burst into tears: "We are going to the end of the earth!" they wailed.

Since then, of course, their perception of the size of the world has drastically changed — and Cairo has all but enveloped Harrania as its population grew to its present 15 million.

Bible stories

Wissa Wassef also took care to tell many stories, legends and narratives from the Bible, which then served for inspiration for tapestries. He took pains to stimulate children who were inclined to copy what others were doing. He never criticised their work, though financial reward varied according to certain criteria of quality that had been established.

What astounds visitors is that the children (and the weavers who are now adults), do not work from a drawing but create their design directly on the loom — even though they cannot see the whole of the work, since the part that has been completed gradually disappears behind the loom. To Wissa Wassef this was a particularly important innovation, since it avoided the divorce of creation and execution proper. The young weavers developed their own terminology, and one significant concept was that of "melody" — a reference to patterns and their variations. Also important is that all the wool was dyed with plants grown in the garden.

The children are predominantly Muslim. One striking difference is apparent between the

work of city-dwelling Coptic Christians, who tend to represent their subjects in a more abstract and schematic way, and the rural Muslims, who show a keen sense of naturalistic observation, reversing the stereotypes about Muslim culture's resistance to representation.

Second generation

Wissa Wassef died of a heart attack in 1974. His death was a tremendous shock to all concerned, including the young weavers, many of them then approaching 30. But Sophie and Suzanne, decided to carry on and invited young people interested in weaving to make themselves known. About a hundred applied, but only 40 could be accepted.

Children of this "second generation" were encouraged to find an original form of their own and the stylistic difference is perceptible in subtler shadings of colour and a greater mastery of form at an early age. The young generation benefited from the groundbreaking technical work of their elders and were thus free to devote more energy to the aesthetic aspects.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the enterprise, after close to 50 years, is the way in which the children have developed into mature craftsmen. The work done during the first years had some of the universal characteristics of children's drawings. In subsequent years they still contained simplifications of forms, as can be found in folk weaving of various periods. But the work done in the '80s by weavers now at the height of their maturity has achieved a style that is the result of long ripening.

Weavers like Mohammed Moussa, Garia Mahmoud and Ashour Messebbi, all of them in their 40s, have begun producing large landscape works which can take them a full year to weave and which have the balance of a mature style.



"Antelopes," by Fawzi Mohammed

POPULATION AND WORLD RESOURCES:

"One billion people are now being added to the human race every twelve years," says the 1988 State of World Population report. But we are consuming world resources even faster than population is growing.

Population boom

Debt repayment has forced many of the world's developing countries to turn to foreign creditors for loans.

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Economists predict gradual rise in yen's role

TOKYO (AP) — The U.S. dollar's predominance in global financial dealings is falling as growing economic interdependence within Asia and other regions increases reliance on the Japanese yen and other currencies, economists said Tuesday.

The yen may not replace the dollar as the international official reserve currency, but trends point to greater use of the yen and Deutsche mark and a commensurate decline in the dollar's importance, David Hale, chief economist of Kemper Financial Services Inc., said.

"There are very compelling arguments why the yen should become an important international reserve asset," Hale said. "These is a tremendous mismatch between the yen's importance and the role it plays in the world economy."

Japan's \$3 trillion gross national product in 1988, the \$4 trillion capitalisation of the Tokyo Stock Exchange and international bank

assets estimated by the Bank of International Settlements at \$625.8 billion — compared to U.S. bank assets of \$492 billion — are evidence of the dramatic growth in Japan's relative economic power, Hale said.

The emergence of Asia as a major economic growth region is one reason for the dollar's declining importance as a foreign reserve currency, said economists attending a conference entitled "Task Force on Pacific Rim Strategies."

Trade within the Asian region is growing so quickly that it will soon overtake trans-Pacific trade, said Takashi Hosomi, chairman of NLI Research and former finance ministry adviser.

"Trade volume in East Asia totalled \$84 billion in 1987 and it is growing faster than trans-Pacific trade, which totalled \$104 billion," Hosomi said.

Japanese banks are increasing- ly using the yen in international lending — their external yen-denominated loans are estimated at 13 trillion yen (\$104 billion), Hale said.

Japan is the largest lender to a number of Asian countries, and yen loans account for 30 per cent of Malaysia's and Indonesia's foreign debt and 40 per cent of Thailand's, he said.

Growing overseas direct investment by Japanese firms in Asia is also expanding the yen's zone of influence.

"It would be logical to expect in the 1990s a regional economic bloc to emerge around Japan," Hale said.

Economists attending the conference predicted that changes in the relative importance of the yen

and the dollar would be gradual. "I don't think the yen will take the position of the dollar, but will function to supplement the dollar," said Yasuo Kanzaki, executive vice president of Nikko Securities Co.

Instead, a number of currencies may be used.

"The staggering growth in the volume of international capital flows makes it much more difficult for a single currency to play such a significant role as in the past," said Lawrence Summers, economics professor at Harvard University.

"I think in the future there will be no reserve currency as we have known it in the past," said Tane Grant, a member of the board of directors of the Futures Industry Association.

At the end of 1987, the dollar accounted for 67 per cent of official worldwide foreign exchange reserves, down from 70 to 80 per cent in the 1970s, the

International Monetary Fund says.

The yen accounted for seven per cent of world official reserves and the Deutsche mark for 14.7 per cent.

The pound sterling, which before World War I accounted for 38 per cent of official reserves, now accounts for 2.6 per cent.

"The yen is likely to reach 14 to 15 per cent (of worldwide official reserves) by the mid-1990s," Hale said.

But a number of factors limit the yen's viability as a reserve currency, including limits on the number of investment opportunities in Japan's financial markets and exchange rate volatility, which discourages the use of yen-denominated contracts in foreign trade, Hale said.

More than 35 per cent of Japan's export contracts are yen-denominated, up from 17.5 per cent in 1975, and nearly 10 per

cent of its import contracts are yen-denominated, up from less than one per cent in 1975, he said.

But in Britain and West Germany, 80 per cent of their exports and 40 per cent of their imports are denominated in their own currencies, Hale said.

The dollar "allows better control of risks," said Makoto Utsunomiya, director general of the finance ministry's international finance bureau. He noted that there was no particular reason not to use the dollar in transactions.

Utsunomiya and other Japanese officials were unenthusiastic about the yen's potential as a reserve currency, explaining that the dollar is supported by both military and economic power.

The yen's vulnerability is that Japan's strength lies only in economic power because it lacks a defence capability and natural resources," Hosomi said.

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Kuwaiti cabinet approves airport tax

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's cabinet Wednesday approved a two dinar (\$7) tax on passengers leaving from Kuwait airport, a spokesman said. Acting minister of state for cabinet affairs Nasser Abdulla Al Rodhan told reporters children younger than 12 would be exempted. The measure requires final approval by the Emiri Court.

Islamic banks to finance Sudan

ABU DHABI (R) — Islamic banks have agreed to finance projects to help Sudan, the official Emirates News Agency (WAM) reported Wednesday. The International Islamic Banks Union (IIBU) board decided in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, this week to set up a committee to study the projects, WAM quoted IIBU Deputy Chairman Said Lootah as saying. "We will concentrate on farming, manufacturing and communication projects that will yield the highest possible return for Sudan's economy," Lootah, chairman of the Dubai Islamic Bank, said. The IIBU groups more than 50 Islamic banks, which charge no interest but allow the lender to take a percentage of profits.

Iraq opens \$416 million highway

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has opened a 130 million dinar (\$416 million) road which forms part of a planned highway linking it with Kuwait in the south and Syria and Jordan in the west. The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Wednesday the 106-kilometre road from Baghdad to the western town of Hillah was built by a Yugoslav company, Union Engineering, and opened Tuesday. It is the fourth phase of the 1,200-kilometre project.

Tunisia plans to amend banking laws

TUNIS (R) — The Tunisian government plans to amend its banking laws to break down the barriers between different types of banks, central bank governor Ismail Kheil said in an interview published Wednesday. In a banking supplement to the government newspaper La Presse, he said: "The aim is to arrive by stages at a more integrated banking system which would allow each institution to choose its own place in the market. Each financial institution will have three windows, one for commercial activity, one for long-term investment and one for offshore activities. They will be able to choose which activity to specialise in." Tunisia now imposes different rules for local banks, development banks and offshore banks. Kheil, a reformer close to President Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali, gave no indication of when the amended legislation would go to parliament.

Cost of food aid soars

ROME (R) — The cost of food aid for the world's poorer nations soared to a record \$136 million in 1988, the World Food Programme (WFP) has revealed. The WFP, a branch of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation, blamed higher world market prices, largely due to unfavourable weather conditions in Asia and North America. The cost of the 608,500 tonnes of food for distribution was up 42 per cent on 1987. Some \$108 million worth of the food came from the developing world, under a WFP policy of buying where possible surplus stocks from Third World countries. Zimbabwe was the main African supplier and Thailand the main Asian supplier, the WFP said. Nearly half the amount spent buying food was on behalf of donor countries who channelled bilateral contributions through the programme. The WFP said a favourable harvest and harvest outlook in several African countries, particularly in West Africa, should enable its present food-buying policy to continue this year.

Austerity in China 'hits wrong targets'

PEKING (R) — China said Wednesday that a four-month austerity programme had failed to slow its runaway economy.

The Economic Daily said that industrial output in the fourth quarter surged by 18.8 per cent over the same period last year, the fastest quarterly growth of 1988, despite tough measures introduced in September to slow it down.

"This high-speed growth is wrong for China," the paper said. "It has led to shortages of cash and credit, foreign debt and serious problems in transport."

The State Statistical Bureau said industrial output, though down from more than 20 per cent growth in October, rose at a faster rate in December than in November.

Economists said that the austerity programme was having an effect but it was hitting the wrong targets.

Millions of farmers are getting paid for their produce in IOUs instead of cash which local authorities are spending on new

textile and cigarette factories, despite orders from Peking that farm goods get priority.

Banks have been told they will not get more money from Peking and ordered to make better use of their limited funds — so some have prevented people from withdrawing their money.

The statistical news said banks in Wuzhou in the southwest were paying only half of the wages due to workers in some companies, keeping the other half as forced savings, causing great resentment among workers some of whom were unable to meet basic living costs.

Economic Daily said banks in Anhui, central China, were improperly docking up to 50 yuan (\$13.5) a month per worker, in the name of "patriotic savings" or "construction savings," which they could only withdraw later.

Such practices deterred other people from putting their extra money into banks which desperately needed it, it said.

Central banks again hit dollar

LONDON (R) — Central banks renewed concerted open market sales of the dollars Wednesday trying to stop a potentially disruptive rally by the U.S. currency.

A third straight day of coordinated intervention brought the central banks of the United States, West Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Austria, and The Netherlands into the market selling dollars for Deutsche marks soon after New York trading began.

The dollar had earlier shot to its best in three months, rising above 1.84 marks. It had eased below 1.83 as speculators took profits before the central banks came in and sent it further down to trade just under 1.82.

It is still up about five pence since the start of the year. Wednesday's coordinated action was the banks' biggest show of force since the dollar took off at the start of the new year.

Relatively high U.S. interest rates, which offer a bigger return on many dollar assets, and the prospect that they may have to rise further to dampen inflation in

a strong U.S. economy, are attracting money to dollars.

Interest rates in Britain are also high, attracting funds to the pound, as the British government fights rising inflation. The pound soared to 3.2550 marks, its strongest in more than 2½ years, Wednesday after Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson said he was not worried by its appreciation.

The Bank of England sold pounds for marks.

Several nations, particularly West Germany, are worried about their inflation as the strong dollar pushes up import bills and about the outflow of funds into trade just under 1.82.

Economists say that a hazard is that there might be a competing round of interest rate rises with West Germany possibly going up, too. The Swiss National Bank said Wednesday that it had been tightened liquidity.

A chain reaction of interest rate rises might crimp the expansion of the global economy.

But Bank of Japan Governor

Satoshi Sumita, who was asked by reporters Wednesday about the risk of that kind of chain reaction, said: "It's impossible. It won't happen."

All eyes were on Washington where Lawson met U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady Tuesday. West German Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg also sees Brady this week.

One question was whether the bilateral exchanges might lead to an early meeting of finance ministers of the Group of Seven industrial nations to coordinate policy with the incoming Bush administration.

Sumita meanwhile said that central bankers of the United States, Japan and West Germany, who have just held routine talks in Basle, reaffirmed a belief in the need for stable currencies.

Fear of further concerted central bank intervention against the dollar cooled some of the enthusiasm for it Wednesday and some dealers wondered if its latest rally might not be ending.

"There's a feeling the dollar may be overbought for the time

being, and it may be time for a period of consolidation," said Nigel Green, assistant director of foreign exchange at EBC-Amro Bank in London.

Others said that if U.S. trade figures due next Wednesday are bad, they could hit the dollar.

Meanwhile, the feeling that the Federal Reserve (Fed), the U.S. central bank, favours tighter money was among factors which Tuesday snapped a four-day rally in Wall Street stocks. The Dow Jones industrial average ended down 6.25 at 2,193.21.

High interest rates tend to siphon funds out of stocks into interest-bearing assets and to pinch corporate profits.

"Investors are... concluding that the Fed is leaning on the side of tighter monetary policy," Wall Street analysts Hugh Johnson of First Albany said. "That makes it feel edgy owning stocks."

But Tokyo stocks surged to a record with investors increasingly convinced that Japan's new imperial era had sired a "bull" or rising market, brokers said.

Argentines sweat through energy crisis

BUENOS AIRES (R) — It is 6 p.m. and the end of a long, hot working day in the middle of Argentina's summer.

If you live in area A-1, you can take the lift up to your air-conditioned apartment on the 10th floor, fix an ice-cold drink and relax in front of the television.

If you live in D-2, returning home can be a nightmare with a long wait for the train, no lift, no television and no ice in the refrigerator.

But in a few hours the situation could be reversed.

A-1 dwellers will begin to sweat as apartments become stuffy, drinks go warm and televisions go blank. Across Buenos Aires in D-2, residents will blow out the candles as the electricity comes back.

Since the start of an energy

crisis nearly a month ago, Buenos Aires has been divided into coded areas subject to three- to five-hour power cuts on a rota basis, mostly twice daily.

A government-decreed reduction in television broadcasts to four hours every evening has led to a sharp rise in video rentals.

Hundreds of thousands of residents of Buenos Aires, with a population of 10 million, live in high-rise blocks.

In one building where the lift does not work, the porter said people carry water and food up to an old couple — he AZ, She ZO — who have been virtually isolated because neither dare use the stairs.

In the poorer districts on the outskirts of Buenos Aires hundreds of people, mainly children, need medical attention after being affected by dirty water or rotten food or because of dehydration.

People in exclusive quarters of Buenos Aires exempt from the power cuts earlier in the crisis now look for unorthodox ways to keep the refrigerator going, like using an extension to hook it into a neighbour's plug on a different rotator.

Another way to escape the consequences of a cut is to plan a trip to cinema, restaurant or bar in another area to pass the time until power is restored at home.

A trip across the river plate estuary to the seaside resorts of Uruguay is another escape route — for those who can afford it.

In the poorer districts on the outskirts of Buenos Aires hundreds of people, mainly children, need medical attention after being affected by dirty water or rotten food or because of dehydration.

Foreign currency analyst Per Braantammar of the Nordbanken Bank predicted the move would lower interest rates by eliminating the monopoly of Swedish banks on the loan market.

"It will strengthen the Swedish krona and reassure people, especially in Europe, that Sweden is pursuing an international policy," he told the Associated Press.

The move also would reduce inflationary pressure and help Felt meet his goal of 5.5 per cent inflation next year, he said. The fiscal year begins July 1.

budget presented to parliament by Finance Minister Kjell-Olof Feldt, was expected to open Swedish banks to foreign competition, reduce interest and trim inflation, which is running about twice the European average at more than six per cent.

The proposed budget of 375 billion kronor (\$60.5 billion), which also included a controversial cut for schools, was the first with a budget surplus since 1962.

The deregulation will remove the final barriers for the movement of foreign currency, which the government has been gradually relaxing for several years, and bring Sweden into line with Europe's plan to eliminate currency restrictions by 1992.

But transactions would be monitored through a foreign exchange bank to prevent tax evasion by investing in foreign markets, according to the budget proposal.

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Feldt told a news conference he hoped the move would lead to higher efficiency in the Swedish economy, in which the public sector accounts for about 60 per cent of the gross national product.

In the long term it is deeply worrying that Sweden's economic growth is not higher, despite the fact that the economy is running full and there is a lack of labour,"

Feldt said.

The growth rate in other Western nations has been about four per cent in the past five years, but it has been 2.5 per cent to three per cent in Sweden, he said, predicting 1.7 per cent growth next year.

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Cash beats McEnroe in exhibition

ADELAIDE (AP) — Australian Pat Cash, unleashing a mixture of brilliance and blunder, beat long-time idol John McEnroe in straight sets in the opening match of the Rio international tennis challenge at Adelaide's memorial drive courts Wednesday. Cash accounted for the 23-year-old American 7-6, 6-4 in the exhibition event, which several big name players are using as a warm-up for the Australian Open in Melbourne next week.

Drugs committee tackles broad issues

TORONTO (AP) — Months of hearings into the use of drugs by amateur athletes prompted by the Olympic scandal involving Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson start Wednesday. The federal government appointed a commission with sweeping powers to investigate Canadian athletes after Johnson was stripped of his gold medal for testing positive for anabolic steroids at the summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. Ontario associate chief justice Charles Dubin, the commission's head, said in November that the investigation would be much more than a review of what was involved in Johnson's world record, 9.79 second, 100-metre race on Sept. 24. "I think it also important to consider whether there are pressures being placed on our young men and women athletes to tempt them to cheat," Dubin said. "Have we, as Canadians, lost track of what athletic competition is all about?"

Saudi soccer players start anti-drugs campaign

RIYADH (AP) — The Saudi Arabian Soccer Federation announced Tuesday that its players henceforth would sport T-shirts emblazoned with the words "no to drugs." Saudi Arabia, at the instructions of King Fahd, has instituted a firm anti-drug campaign that includes the death penalty for drug smugglers and traffickers. The federation's announcement said that the shirts will first appear at the finals in the upcoming games of the "cup of the custodian of the two holy shrines," King Fahd's official title. The decision was made at a meeting of the federation board, chaired by Prince Faisal Bin Fahd, Secretary-General for Youth Welfare and the son of the Saudi monarch. It was adopted "out of conviction of the menace of this plague and as a contribution to the anti-drug campaign," the announcement said.

African player of the year disappears

BRUSSELS (R) — Zambian Kahusha Bwalya, African footballer of the year for 1988, failed to report back to his Belgian first division soccer club Cercle Bruges after playing in a World Cup qualifier in Morocco. A club official, who declined to be named, said Wednesday that left-winger Kahusha was expected to report back on Monday, one day after the match which Zambia lost 1-0. "We don't know where he is," the official said. "We just cannot tolerate it." He said it was too soon to say if Kahusha would be disciplined. Kahusha, 25, who shot to fame when he scored three goals for Zambia against Italy in the Seoul Olympics, was due to play for Cercle Bruges in an indoor tournament in Ghent, Belgium, starting Wednesday.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold: ♦A♦K ♠A♦K ♣A♦K ♠A♦K
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 NT Pass 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♦A♦K ♠A♦K ♣A♦K ♠A♦K
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
What action do you take?

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♦A♦K ♠A♦K ♣A♦K ♠A♦K
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold: ♦A♦K ♠A♦K ♣A♦K ♠A♦K
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

Look for answers on Monday.

'Wonderskates' are tested

OSLO (AP) — Norwegian speedskating coach and an engineer have invented new skates which they claim will revolutionise sports on ice.

Finn Halvorsen, Norway's former national speedskating coach, and Jan Bratland, an engineer, have tested and patented strong, aerodynamic but extra-light skates for ice hockey and speedskating. Aftenposten, Oslo's afternoon newspaper, reported Tuesday.

The newspaper said that the new skates — the result of some 6,000 hours of work over four years — could cut a half-second from a speedskater's time in the 500 metres and up to 10 seconds in a 10,000-metre event.

The paper gave no evidence to support the claims. Halvorsen and Bratland were unavailable for comment.

The inventors told the newspaper that the new skates — one

U.K. debates steroids law

LONDON (AP) — A bill that would impose a criminal penalty on anyone caught taking or supplying anabolic steroids without a prescription was introduced in Britain's House of Commons Tuesday.

The bill would add steroids to a list of controlled substances covered by the 1971 misuse of drugs act, making them illegal for the first time in Britain. Though they are not allowed by most sports organisations, steroids are legal in Britain and most other coun-

tries.

"The events of last summer only serve to underline the necessity for government action to tackle drug abuse in sport," said Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Party's expert on sports and the sponsor of the bill, referring to drug scandals at the Seoul Olympics.

"I hope ministers understand that the physical health of athletes will be at risk so long as anabolic steroids remain available," Campbell said.

Two state institutions supporting technical research and inventors helped pay for the project with nearly \$20,000.

Navratilova hits top form

Navratilova hits top form

Italian Rafaela Reggi, 6-3, 7-5. American Mary Joe Fernandez, 17, lived up to her fourth seeding by downing tough New Zealander Belinda Cordwell 6-3, 6-0.

In other second-round matches, No. 5 seed Party Fenwick of the United States, beat Czechoslovakia's Petra Langrova 6-2, 6-3 and South Africa's Dinky Van Rensburg beat American Ann Henricksson, a past finalist, 7-5, 6-3.

Eleventh-seeded Austrian Judith Wiesner beat Australian Anne Minter, the seventh seed, 7-5, 6-3.

In men's second-round matches, sixth-seed Christo Van Rensburg of South Africa beat Soviet player Alexander Volkov 7-6 (7-3), 7-6 (7-3) Wednesday.

Defending champion and second seed, Pam Shriver was the first player into the quarterfinals Wednesday with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Japan's Etsuko Inoue.

Ninth-seeded Hana Mandlikova scored the second victory of her comeback to move into the third round by beating France's Nathalie Herremans 6-3, 6-3 and 16th-seeded Terry Phelps of the United States beat sixth-seeded

Martina Navratilova

Wednesday.

"I'm a little behind in my preparation... because I sprained my ankle playing tennis last week. That put me back four days and I have also had a cold since I arrived here," Navratilova said.

A

three-time winner of the New South Wales tournament, Navratilova will face South African Dinky Van Rensburg on Sydney's White City courts Thursday.

"It is not surprising to me but it is surprising a lot of people here," said coach John Kowalski.

The South Americans dominated the first half, relying on their better skills and cooler nerves when they exploited slack marking to score the first goal through Juan Avals.

B

ut the physically superior U.S. team dominated the second half. Pressure increased and paid off when a couple of fine shots from Peter Vermes put them ahead. Argentina neglected defense from then onwards allowing Juli Veece more than time enough to line up a third goal.

C

Brazil took a firm option on the semifinals, blasting pre-tournament favourite Paraguay 5-1, who never had a chance. Benatti, Marquinhos and Atila put the match beyond doubt by half-time.

D

Paraguay, which had provided the most attractive soccer during the first round of the 16-team event, scored its only goal through Adolfo Jara Heyn.

E

But Brazil further improved on its goal aggregate with goals by Neimar and Adilio.

F

The winner of each group plays

G

the runner-up of the other group Saturday. The semifinals and Sunday's final will both be at the 7,000-capacity Aboy Hall here.

H

Hungary trailed 2-0 after less than a minute but kept their cool afterwards and with classy combination play came back to draw 3-3.

I

Hungary was caught cold by

J

the Dutch, who scored on their

K

opening move through Andre Bakker and half a minute later Captain Vic Hermans punished a blunder by the goalie with a second goal. "Victory was there for the taking," said Dutch coach Ron Groenewoud. But they didn't.

L

Hungary held on. Trailing 3-1 till midway in the second half, they produced their best combination moves to dislodge a panicky Dutch defence and earn a late draw.

M

Belgium, meanwhile, scored

N

big against Italy to take the lead in the European group.

O

The tournament began with 16

P

nations from across the world on

Q

Jan. 5, but the traditional soccer

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powers from Europe and South

S

America have dominated play,

T

allowing only the United States

U

to win.

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Paraguay

W

and Brazil.

X

Hungary

Y

Yugoslavia

Z

Zambia

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Gorbachev takes new step towards electoral process

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has embarked on the latest step in transforming the country's parliamentary system amid public doubts over whether the overhaul will amount to fundamental change.

Gorbachev told the Communist Party's central committee Tuesday the elections faced difficulties, including "group egoism, ambition and political careerism."

He proposed a list of 100 party candidates to be elected to the revamped national parliament in March.

They will be formally elected at an expanded central commission meeting to the 100 seats set aside for the party in the new 2,250-member parliament, which Gorbachev hopes will boost popular involvement in politics.

Two-thirds of the new parliament — the congress of people's deputies — will be elected March 26 in national elections contested by more than one candidate a seat.

The remainder of the seats are set aside for the Communist Party and organisations ranging from the academy of sciences, journalists', composers' and artists' unions to sports and stamp collecting clubs.

Doubts about the system have been publicly expressed — particularly the allocation of seats to public groups. Some interest groups have complained at being left out of the allocation process.

An opinion conducted by the communist youth news paper Komsomolskaya Pravda showed 65.5 per cent of respondents opposed to the idea.

Intellectuals have also criticised the new parliament's two-chamber structure, saying it will dilute still further the choice of the voter.

Under laws passed last month, the congress will elect a 422-member chamber known as the Supreme Soviet — also the name of the old parliament.

The new Supreme Soviet will meet for seven or eight months a year, instead of the four to six-day sessions of the old parliament. No change has been made in

whose mandate extended little beyond rubber-stamping party decisions.

TASS said Tuesday that campaigning for the elected part of the parliament was proceeding amid spirited debate.

It said two Moscow enterprises had nominated their directors as candidates but stressed: "this does not at all mean, though that candidates are being nominated in the old way, with people merely endorsing whoever was proposed to them."

The agency said former Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin was among those whose nomination was unsuccessfully proposed at a Moscow car plant.

Yeltsin was dropped from his Moscow post in November 1987 and from his seat in the Politburo last February after criticising the pace of Gorbachev's reforms as too slow.

In a speech delivered before the decision, President Mikhail S.

Gorbachev said 312 names remaining from tens of thousands submitted had gone to the ruling 12-member Politburo, and individual candidates can also offer their views, Gorbachev said. The document was not released Tuesday.

"We should proceed from the premise that the other social organisations will come to the elections with their own campaign documents," and individual candidates can also offer their views, Gorbachev said.

"The Soviet people are entitled to know the objectives and tasks formulated by the party for the immediate future, and the platform it takes to elections," TASS quoted Gorbachev as saying. The document was not released Tuesday.

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GREENPEACE CLASHES WITH THE FRENCH

French construction workers dragging away Greenpeace environmental activists, who had blocked work on an airstrip at Dumont d'Urville, Adelie Coast, in Antarctica. A Greenpeace spokesman asserted that 15 persons had been injured, none seriously, in the "melee." Greenpeace says that the airstrip threatens the local penguins.

Montenegrin state leaders resign

BELGRADE (R) — State and Communist Party leaders in Yugoslavia's southern republic of Montenegro resigned Wednesday as about 50,000 demonstrators laid siege to government buildings, the Tanjug news agency said.

Tanjug said the Montenegro state presidency tendered its collective resignation and it was expected to be confirmed by regional parliament Friday.

Regional party leaders also submitted their resignations which were expected to be approved at a central committee meeting later Wednesday.

The resignations came after two days of student and worker protests in Montenegro's

capital Titograd, in which 50,000 demonstrators demanded sacking of the entire leadership, blamed for abuse of power and mismanagement of the economy.

Montenegrin workers, hit by 250 per cent inflation and falling living standards, called for the sacking of their leaders last October but their protests were crushed by riot police.

Yugoslavia's worsening economic and political crisis, marked by demonstrations across the country, led to the toppling of Prime Minister Branko Mikulic's government in December.

The text of both resignations

was read to demonstrators in Titograd by Bozidar Tadic, vice-president of the Montenegrin parliament. He pleaded with demonstrators to return to work, saying all their demands had been met.

He said the leadership decided to resign "because of the threat of the worsening security situation."

The protest in Titograd, 600 kilometres south of Belgrade, was led by thousands of local metal workers who last October staged a similar protest which was crushed by riot police.

Montenegro, with a population of only 600,000 people live

below the poverty level, according to official data.

The average monthly wage is less than \$80 and about 25 per cent of the work force is unemployed.

The protesters had also demanded the sacking of Vidoje Zarkovic and Marko Orlicic, representing Montenegro in the Yugoslav Communist Party Politburo, and of Veselin Djuricovic, member of the Yugoslav State Presidency.

In a similar coup, workers toppled the regional leadership in Vojvodina province, a part of Serbia, last October, setting a precedent for later unrest in Montenegro.

Below: Burmese students forcibly repatriated

BANGKOK (AP) — Thailand has forcibly repatriated Burmese students to their homeland, subjecting them to possible detention and harsh treatment by Burma's military government, Amnesty International charged.

The London-based human rights organisation said Tuesday that Thailand, on Jan. 6 forcibly returned 22 students who had fled neighbouring Burma after a bloody military coup Sept. 18.

In a statement telexed to news agencies in Bangkok Wednesday, amnesty said it feared the 22 and other students previously repatriated by Thailand may have been detained and abused by security personnel in Burma.

Thai authorities have denied forcing any students back and the Burmese government claims they are treated well on their return.

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The statement said the group of 22 students who were forcibly repatriated included Sai Myon Wyn Tun and Kyai Moe, both 23, who had taken leading roles in the August and September demonstrations for democracy.

It said the 22 were part of a group of 36 students of the Shan ethnic minority whom Thai police rounded up two weeks ago in Mae Hong Son province bordering Burma.

The arrests marked an apparent move by the government of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, which took office only six weeks ago, to root out union

corruption and end Hernandez Galicia's control over the country's oil fields and refineries.

Three other union officials, including former Secretary General Jose Sosa Martinez, were detained in Mexico City.

Mexico, the world's fourth largest oil exporter, receives about a third of its export income from crude sales, about half of which go to the United States.

Authorities arrested the leader of Mexico's oil workers union,

causing a walkout by refinery workers and a standoff between the new government and the country's most powerful labour group.

Work stoppages were reported at seven oil refineries across the country as union leaders threatened to shut the country's important oil industry down in protest over the arrest.

Joaquin Hernandez Galicia, known as "la quina" was arrested along with 14 other union officials in a raid in the northwestern city Ciudad Madero, the federal attorney general's office said.

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